THE BAYALATAS OF NORTH KARNATAKA

DR. BASAVARAJA MALASHETTY

TRANSLATED BY
DR. PARVATHI G. AITHAL

THE BAYALATAS OF NORTH KARNATAKA

by
Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty

Translated by
Dr. Parvathi G. Aithal

Karnataka Janapada Vishwavidyalaya
Gotagodi - 581 197, Shiggavi

The Bayalatas Of North Karnataka
(Folk theatres of North Karnataka)

by

Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty
Professor (Rtd)
Vijayanagar Collage,
Hospet Bellary, Dist.

Translated by

Dr. Parvathi G. Aithal
Associate Professor of English
Bhandarkars' College,
Kundapura 576 201

Published by
Prof. S.C. Ramesh
Director
Centre for Extension and Consultancy
Karantaka Jaanapada University
Gotagodi - 581 197
Shiggavi Taluk, Haveri Dist, Karnataka
Phone: 0836 - 2255180

Pages: xvi + 208 = 224 **Price:** ₹ 130/-

www.janapadauni.in
First Impression : 2014
ISBN - 978-93-83149-23-0

© Director
Centre for Folklore Translation
Karantaka Jaanapada University
Gotagodi - 581 197

Cover page Design: **K.K. Makali**

Copies available at
Karnataka Jaanapada Vishwavidyalaya
Gotagodi - 581 197
Tq. Shiggoan Dist. Haveri

Printed At
Raja Printers, Bangalore
Ph: 22234066

Travel around the world or Traverse through the Books

Karnataka is the source of invaluable wealth of the folklore. The job of tending and cherishing this invaluable and limitless knowledge is to be honoured always. Founding of Folklore University, in order to materialize such purposes was quite a need of the hour. With a strong desire of transforming the love, expectations and dreams of the population that breathes the very culture of this land. Karnataka Folklore University the first Folklore University of the world has been established. The establishment of the University has assumed an historical importance as it carries forward the motto and responsibility of searching the sources of the native culture and spreading it throughout the world, not merely confining to the limits of Kannada speaking world.

The Vision and mission of the University are collecting, editing, learning and exhibiting the knowledge of all tribes. These are to be carried out still more effectively, quantitatively and scientifically. Still, the wealth of knowledge in our multi-cultural and multi-lingual land lies buried limitlessly and waits to be unearthed and unveiled. We need not simply feel proud of the achievements accomplished by us. In this field of folklore which is virtually unfathomable. Folklore University is acting with all the humbleness and consciousness that work to be carried out in this field is still beyond measure. The University is trying to shed floodlight on the fact that the native knowledge be made a source for the contemporary world which is changing fast due to the influence of globalization. It is also the conviction of the University that the world view and prudence of the folk hold a parallel guidance to the population of our times. There is an urgent need before us to emphasize oral cultural expression and

oral narratives instead of simply surrendering to the hegemony of the learned language or refined language.

There is a strong and deep rooted belief that folklore is always against the contemporary knowledge system and modern technology. There is greater need now than ever to interpret folklore beyond the established idea of storing, merely the old one and transferring it to the next generation. The knowledge that, folklore is as heavy as the earth, as extensive as the sky, as dynamic as water and above all as the air for our breathing has to down upon us. All in all folklore is a way of life that has embraced everything indivisibly. It is a storehouse of knowledge which has held it in a unique way. Therefore the University is functioning with devotion and dedication towards realization of its watchword "we have sown the gold to the whole field" (*Honna bittevu holakella*). This gold which was a hidden wealth hither to has to become known to the whole world. The aim of the University, being the seat of knowledge, must be imparting, protecting and disseminating the knowledge. This country has decided to sow the seeds of native knowledge through this University for the first time in the world. The process of sowing and growing is not merely a prelude / prologue for a new birth but also a farm of continuity and conservation of the knowledge system or knowledge tradition.

Our contemporary knowledge system is an offspring of traditional knowledge and the sources of performance. We have to develop a sturdy system at our rural level based on the application of our ancestral folkloristic knowledge and technological skills so that it can become more productive. But due to the contemporary influence of liberalization, privatization and globalization there are drastic changes in folklore. In that the capitalist entrepreneurship has been pushing certain branches of knowledge to the margin while foregrounding some others which are profitable to them. Hence, in the present context it is essential to devise the modules of study of

traditional knowledge and science on absolutely modern scientific base, to suit them to the present needs and deeds. In the present changed scenario folklore is assuming metamorphosis from within. Hence we have to identify the mettle of folklore to protest against such a set up which lies embedded within the folklore itself. In this direction we have to become active in applying the native traditional knowledge and culture to the modern context. According to the adage of the folk there are only two ways to acquire knowledge, viz: traveling around the world or traversing through the book. It is necessary for man to follow both the ways to quench his thirst for knowledge. But to acquire the knowledge at least one of these two must be activated. Our University is rendering the yeomen service of publishing the valuable times and motivating the masses to read them. Also our University is extending the frontiers of its field of activity by way of undertaking various projects and organizing programmes of special study, teaching and research pertaining to the field of folk arts, folk literature and culture and traditions of this land. The main objectives of the University are collecting all available knowledge systems which are native in their nature, comprehending the ever dynamic and forceful folklore from its very source and comparing it with the other modern branches of knowledge and reforming it and continuing this process like and avowed discipline etc. As part of this notion, through its centre for Extension and Consultancy, our University has come forward to publish books. Thereby it envisages to open the new vistas in the field of inter-disciplinary research.

'The larger the island of knowledge, the longer the shoreline of wonder'. Though this statement has been made about science, it is true of folklore too. Folklore is an amazingly vast and pervasive world of unending information and unfathomable knowledge. Its study stimulates our intellectual, creative and aesthetic desires. It tells us about the people's attitudes, beliefs, concerns, and the entire way of their life. That is why our university has undertaken the project

of translating folklore between Kannada and other languages, hoping that it may open the gateway of knowledge of folklore at the world level.

I have always felt that Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty's 'Utthara Karnatakada Bayalatagalu' is a fairly elaborate work on the wonderful folk art of Bayalatas. At a time when no other means of entertainment were there, our folk in those days had found various ways of presenting their talents through Bayalatas. Dr. Malashetty has given a vivid description of different varieties of Bayalatas like Moodalapaya, Dappinata, Parijatha etc prevalent in diverse regions of North Karnataka. He has given a touch of subjectivity to his narration by repeatedly saying that it is painful to think of how these varieties of Bayalatas are losing their original lustre and liveliness.

This valuable book has been translated into English by Dr. Parvathi G.Aithal. Translation is not an easy job. Especially, translation of folklore is a herculean task. Unless the translator is creative and extraordinarily resourceful, he/she cannot render it successfully. Here, a reading of Parvathi G.aithal's lucid presentation of Dr. Malashetty's book as 'The Bayalatas of North Karnataka' in a simple and easily understandable style, very soundly establishes the fact that it is an effective translation. Hence, on behalf of the university, I heartily congratulate her. I hope that this book will be of great use to the future students of folklore.

I Congratulate and appreciate the concern expressed by the Prof. S.C. Ramesh, Director, Centre for Extension and Consultancy and Registrar (Evaluation) and Dr. K. Premakumara, Director & Professor, Centre for Folklore Translation and all other staff involved in bringing out this publication.

Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna
Vice-Chancellor

From the Director's Desk

Karnataka Folklore University is in action with a desire of collection, study and research of the knowledge of the entire communities, along with other academic activities. The University has gone a step ahead and as a part of its agenda of extending the field of activities it has come forward with the idea of establishing a 'Centre for Extension and Consultancy'. In the true sense of the word Universities must indulge in the process of re-production of knowledge. Along with the preservation of the established ready knowledge they should stretch their hands towards the service of redefining the ever need folk culture and to establish it an proper pedestal. Like the changing of seasons, man's life also goes on changing and becoming responsive & sensible enough. In the present context wherein our folk arts, folk literature and folk culture are losing their impression. The novel research and experiments in the field become futile and meaningless if they don't add colour to our folk culture which is turning pale. Bearing this warning in the mind Folklore University has formed highly useful projects and programmes through its Centre for Extension & Consultancy.

Folklore is one of the interdisciplinary branches of knowledge. Researching the new dimensions of knowledge related to basal life, art, literature and culture is the important agenda before the University. Also the University is vested with the important responsibility of delivering this knowledge to various corners of the world. The University which has come into existence to bring the above said responsibility into practice has established the Centre for Extension and Consultancy. The Centre has a strong desire of understanding the vastness, universality and the root and top of the field of Folklore. Along with this, the centre also has before it the

ideals such as carrying out the rigorous studies and researches based on new models, publishing the works of the great scholars of this land and language and thereby supporting the cause of disseminating the knowledge. The Centre is avowed to spread the knowledge in all directions and as a part of this agenda it has come forward to publish the valuable books. I feel strongly that our laborious efforts attain fruitfulness and meaning if these works of greater value and variety reach the reading public of this land and become useful to them.

It was Albert Einstein who said: 'Learn from yesterday , live for today, and hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning'. This is exactly what the study of folklore inspires us to do. The most interesting aspect of folklore is its vastness and depth, that never stops us from questioning more and more.

How does folklore study help us? Why do we need to study it? These are the questions that arise in our mind when we embark on the study of a rare subject like folklore. No doubt it helps us to fill in the blank spots that literature, anthropology and sociology do not address. We may learn about our cultural heritage as well as how our past continues to shape us. We may know more about where we have been, where we are at present, and where we are likely to go culturally. Understanding other cultures may lead us to a mutual exchange too. If the majority of our country are united by a common language, customs and culture, the destiny of our country might definitely change.

The Bayalatas of North Karnataka' is a powerful manifestation of the usefulness of folklore study. This book is a storehouse of information regarding the Bayalatas prevalent in the North Karnataka region in the past. Moodalapaya, Dappinata, Parijatha and their variations have been depicted here with precision and perfection . The writer of the original Kannada book Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty is a renowned folklorist of Karnataka, and the translator Dr. Parvathi

G.Aithal has established her name in the field of literature as an exponent of the art of translation. Her lucid style has the capacity to enable the reader to easily understand things. I hope that this work will definitely prove to be useful to all those who want to pursue studies in folklore.

I express my indebtedness to Honb'le vice-Chancellor Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna, I thank him for all his cooperation in bringing out this book. My thanks are also due to the Registrar, Prof. D.B.Naik, Dean of the University, Prof. M. Chandra Poojari, Director and Professor Dr. K. Premakumara Director needs special mention and thanks. I am also thankful to Sangamesh S.Gani and Vishwa Gujjar who cooperated in preparing technical pages and also other preprinting activities. I thank Shri K.K.Makali for designing the cover page, Office assistant K.L. Lakshmana and The Raja Printers, Bangalore. I thank all those who worked for the publication of this work directly or indirectly.

Prof. S.C. Ramesh
Director
Centre for Extension and Consultancy

On the way to acquire Folk knowledge

Karnataka is a land of rich folklore and the knowledge is dessiminated particularly in folk epics. The folk arts, rituals, agricultural practices, traditional knowledge systems, native technology, religious centres all have their own specific importance. Many folk epics have been composed based on the life of cultural heroes. There are folk epics which can be equated with classics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Many such epics are passed on from one generation to the next through oral transmission only. Many academicians, Institutions and Universities have effectively done the work of documentation of many such narrative performances. Many of them have been published in the book form as well. Now, there is a need to translate them into English and other Indian languages. With this greater objective, this University has started a 'Centre for Folklore Translation'. There are plans to translate Halumatha Kaavya, Gondara Ramayana, Gadri Palanayaka, Mylaralinga, Mahalingaraya, Syasi Channamma, Gamokkala Mahabharata etc., into English. Also, there are future plans to translate important folk literature from Kannada to other South Indian languages as well.

Varied storytelling traditions exists in Karnataka. These traditions have distinct styles which vary according to the region they originate from. The storytelling traditions of Karnataka are referred to as Bayalata of open air theatre. The Bayalata styles have derived their form and content by rituals. All bayalatas, folk performances are part of a ritual festival consecrated to a local deity. The five key forms of Bayalata are *Dasarata, Sannata, Doddata, Parijata and Yakshagana.* In *Parijatha* and *Yakshagana* a single *narrator* or *sutradhar* controls the story while in the other forms the story is told through a chorus of four or five narrators, aided by a *vidhushaka* or *jestor.*

In early days Bayalata rehearsal are done only in the temples. Therefore, it is natural that the Folk theatre has taken temples as its shelter right from the beginning. There is no doubt that temple itself was their platform in the beginnings and subsequently when the audience felt that the space was too small for them they shifted to open air and hence they came to be known as *Bayalatas.*

It was a serious research work done by Prof. Basavaraj Malashetty for his Ph.D degree. It unfolds religious origin of folk theatre, existence of the Bayalatas, Prangana, Veshagaras, Bahuroopees, Yakshagana, Moodalayapaya, Dappinata, Dasarata, Rajanata, Radhanata, Sannata Parijatha and many more aspects of bayalata performances.

Dr. Parvathi Aithal has taken this assignment seriously and translated the same in stipulated time. Prof. Basavaraja Malashetty also had discussion with her and encouraged her for this translation task.

Firstly I must express my indebtedness to Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna who gave me this opportunity. Also, I must thank Dr. Parwathi Aithal, Kundapura, who is kind enough to translate this book into English. I must thank Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty who permitted and encouraged us to translate his book 'The Bayalatas of North Karnataka'. Also, I must thank Sri. J.R. Ramamurty, retired Chief librarian, Kannada University, Hampi, who is kind enough to review the text and extended his suggestion for betterment. I am grateful to Prof. D.B. Naik, Registrar and Prof. S.C. Ramesh, Registrar (Evaluation) for their constant help and guidance. I thank one and all who supported me in bringing out this valuable work. I hope the English version helps those who wish to study whole folk theatre in detail.

Dr. K. Premakumara
Director & Professor
Centre for Folklore Translation

Translator's Note

Rendering translation of a work of art is like undertaking a journey into a different world. Unlike the simple reading of the book, as it requires a thorough involvement in the work, it not only enriches our experience in the true sense of the word, but stretches the horizon of our knowledge to the maximum extent.

Translation of the renowned folklorist Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty's much acclaimed book 'Uttara Karnatakada Bayalatagalu' into English has worked like the magic of an open sesame on me when the Karnataka Janapada Vishwavidyalaya authorities assigned me the work, I hesitated a little, fearing whether I would be able to execute it effectively, because I knew that it was different from the experience of translating a novel or a short story. First of all, one should have the first hand knowledge of folk literature-the various words and expressions used in the native tongue. And then, finding apt words for them in English is an equally difficult task But, on second thinking I accepted the work because of my fascination for fine arts like music, dance, drama, Bayalatas etc. that I have developed all through my life so far Eventually I took it as a challenge. The reading of Dr. Malashetty's book thrilled me. The amazing collection of information about various types of Bayalatas of North Karnataka, the fusion of modern sensibility with traditional forms of performance, the author's genuine concern for protecting and safeguarding the folk culture unadulterated made me feel that it is a unique book worth being translated into English.

At the time of my translation being published now, I deem it my duty to express my feeling of gratitude to all those who have helped me. I am extremely grateful to Prof. Ambalike Hiryayanna, Vice-Chancellor of the Karnataka Janapada Vishwavidyalya and

Dr. K. Premakumara, Director and Professor, Centre for Folkore Translation and all other authorities concerned for giveng me an opportunity to undertake this translation work, and I must sincerely admit that it has greatly enriched my knowledge and experience. I am greatly indebted to the Janapada Vishwavidyalaya for giving me an opportunity to undertake this project. Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty, The original author of this book has been extremely kind and generous in charing some of my doubts whenever I called him over the telephone. I thank him wholeheartedly for his patience and forbearance. I remember with gratitude my husband Mr. Gangadhara Aithal and my daughters Dr. Ramyatha and Ms. Sushmitha for all their physical help and assistance at home.

I do not know how far I have been successful in fruitfully presenting the English version. I earnestly hope that it may effectively communicate the required information about the topic for those who are enthusiastic to learn about folk Literature.

Dr. Parvathi G. Aithal
Associate Professor
Kundapura

Contents

Travel around the world or Traverse through the books iii

From the Director's Desk vii

On the way to acquire Folk knowledge xi

Translator's Note xiii

1. - Introduction 1

2. - Kannada Bayalata- the Environmental Drive 11

3. - The Rise of Yakshagana 28

4. - Moodalapaya 46

5. - Dappinata 99

6. - Parijatha 165

7. - Conclusion 197

8. - Appendix 203

Our Publications 206

THE BAYALATAS OF NORTH KARNATAKA

INTRODUCTION

DRAMA – THEORY OF RELIGIOUS ORIGIN:

It is not easy to tell precisely about the birth and growth of drama, which is one of the effective means of articulating human feelings and thoughts. The origin of this complex art has been deduced from various perspectives. When the primitive man realised the capacity of the natural powers around him and the good and evil effects they have on his life, either directly or indirectly, there was a significant change. He began to consider all those natural powers as his deities. When he realised that his life will be safe only if he propitiates or keeps them contented, he began to worship them. The opinion of some people is that this kind of worship of Gods and Goddesses itself has given rise to drama. Propounding the theory of the religious origin of drama, Julius Bob says, 'The origins of the theatre are to be found in the religious ceremonial cult through which primitive people of all times have sought to promote the welfare of the tribe, by increasing the favour of the benevolent deities and placating the spirits of evil!'[1] Another example could be given to prove that a number of other scholars have also concurred with this opinion: 'Drama is an imitation of the acts of worshipful beings and this implies that to the primitive mind, the actor is, for the time being, the deity whom he represents.'[2]

To those who reject the above statements as based on mere guesswork, the strong and valid proof that these people give is the Greek theatre. The Greek play, which is the most ancient in the world, was born for the purpose of worshipping God Dionysius. The growth of Greek drama is closely associated with the Dionysian festival. Besides, there are people who find the rise of Sanskrit drama in *Yajnas* and *Yagas* (the religious ritual of worshipping God, through fire). The dialogues between Yama (God of Death) and Yami, and

between Urvashi and Pururava of Rugveda are given as examples for this. However, we cannot come to any conclusion only through these. Since drama is a complex art, which is rather a combination of dance, music and acting, we cannot think of it as originated wholly from religious rituals. Religion only cannot become the central point for the creation of man's entire world of feelings. The fine art, which is the component of dramatic art, must have been originated by itself, and after gaining independent existence, its different components must have merged with drama at some point to arrive at the full-fledged drama. It should be noted that to the growth and development of drama, which was born in this way, sufficient encouragement was given by religion at a later stage.'[3] Because religion had a strong hold on the life of the ancient man, all fine arts needed its support for their growth. But will it be right to say that religion was the taproot of drama? Firmly denying the opinion that the rise of Sanskrit drama could be seen in the Vedas and *Mantras,* the renowned playright Sriranga says, 'It is not right to say that, just like the Greek Drama, Sanskrit drama also is an evolution of religious rituals. During the Vedic Age, Vedas and *Mantras* had been the centre of religious rituals. But they never used to fall on the ears of anyone, except the Brahmins. Then how is it possible for the theatre to take its birth based on Vedas and *Mantras?*'[4] But the contribution of religion to the growth and development of drama cannot be denied, as stories of religious men were the themes of these dramas, and the contexts of religious worship provided opportunities and encouragement for their performance.

The Theory of Imitation:

Drama is more ancient than religion. One opinion is that there is the possibility of man thinking of drama, before he thought about observing religious rituals. This opinion may be called the 'imitation-based theory of drama'. 'Drama and theatre are older than religion. They begin with the first man who thinks that by imitating animals around the campfire he can increase the game and ensure good hunting.'[5] These words say that the imitating tendency of man, which is one of the basic human instincts, is responsible for the rise of drama.

What might the primitive man have tried to mimic at first? In those times, all his struggles were limited to the hunting of animals. That was more important than anything else for him. Therefore he found some pleasure in mimicking their walking style, pranks, voices and cries. This imitation, apart from giving pleasure to him, helped him learn the techniques of hunting. He began to catch hold of his prey by cheating those wild animals, crying like them. He loved to mimic in this manner. Imitating the gaits and sports of the animals became a habit to him and this gave rise to dance. Seen from this perspective, it should be agreed that dance is the first art of man. After fulfilling his fundamental physical needs, what man created first and foremost was dance.'[6] The dance, which was done for pleasure, was later used for various purposes. It received increased importance in religious worships. It will not be wrong to say that dance itself is the first language of man. The primitive man expressed his joys and sorrows through dance; conversed with the deities whom he worshipped and performed his prayer. Thus we have to identify the origin of the other arts in this ancient art itself.[7] As the forms of dance developed, music and songs also progressed simultaneously. Subsequently, they gained independent existence though once they had stood as the background to dance. First it was dance, then music and rhythm and then words were added to music and rhythm. This argument makes it clear that drama must have been moulded by the slow evolution of words into speech. Thus we have to believe that imitation, which gave inspiration to dance, has given rise to drama. It is said that in Cambodia the meaning of drama hall is dance hall.'[8] The sources of the word '*Nataka'*, which is in practice in our region are *Nrith, Nat, Nritha, Natya, Nataka* and *Nata* and all these words originally mean dance. [9] These words and meanings justify the theories of imitation through dance and drama, explicated above.

Sophisticated and Folk Theatre:

The further growth of drama is nothing but the growth of civilisation. With the growth of civilisation, music, dance and literature also grew up. When script came into existence with the evolution of language, drama, which used to be communicated orally, got into the

written form and was firmly rooted in records. It lost its simplicity and assumed a complex nature. The drama which evolved in this way, received a respectable status in the civilised society and attained glory, standing within the frame of certain rules and regulations. When one branch of the original tree of drama began to shine with flying colours in the royal garden, achieving supple growth through the inspiration and encouragement from the civilized society, another branch grew up in the poor lanes of the common folk, nurtured by their love and concern. The sophistications of the refined type of drama did not suit the folk drama, which was born and brought up amongst the poor illiterate people. It did not get any opportunity to acquire grace and elegance. The construction of the history of folk drama, which moved along the larger history, without being noticed much, is a herculean task.

There is no doubt that the folk theatre is more ancient than the sophisticated theatre. When the folk theatre moved along the track of the original drama tradition, and remained as the property of the lower classes, the sophisticated theatre paced up with slow steps of civilisation, adding refinement and polish to it, and became the privilege of the upper class. That means, we may say that the folk theatre itself had its evolution in due course and gave rise to sophisticated theatre. This view, which is universal, could be applied to all sorts of folk and sophisticated dramas. The inspiration of folk tradition stands invariably behind any sophisticated drama. The scholars have recognised this kind of a tradition for Sanskrit drama. 'From a very long time, there used to be an '*Uparupaka*' sort of dramatic presentation. After some time, at some stage, it came down to the inferior and 'unrestrained' level described by Bharatha. It was at the same time that either the Gods or the Brahmins decided to interfere and refine the theatre by systematizing it with finer tastes and objectives.'[10] It is not possible to pass a verdict that the folk drama, which stood as an inspiration to sophisticated drama, is the best art, or the sophisticated drama, which grew up among the educated and the wealthy is superior to the other. History tells us that they were complementary to each other. Though they developed in two different environments, the internal relationship between the two is amazing.

That too, in the ancient times, when there was a deep gulf between the upper and the lower classes in the society, it is really astonishing to see that these two mutually influenced each other so much. It is believed that the role of '*Hamsoda*' in folk drama has been adopted for the '*Vidooshaka*' (clown) in Sanskrit drama. It is also said that the '*Suthradhara*' of Sanskrit drama is the replica of the '*Suthradhara*' (the stage manager) of '*Gombeyatas*' (doll play) of South India. On the contrary, the obvious influence of Sanskrit drama is seen in the stage-setting techniques, costumes and poorvaranga of Bayalatas. It is impossible even to guess at one level which aspect of the one has influenced or inspired the other.'[10]

Though these two genres have given and taken a lot from each other mutually, and though they have existed in the same society from a long time, both of them have retained their individualities too. Very easily we can recognize a number of significant and differentiating elements between the two. 'Folk drama is unselfconscious, spontaneous, boisterously naïve. The classical theatre is rigid, complex, sophisticated. The folk is unhewn, the classical is chiseled.' The folk sprawls, the classical demands mathematical exactness. One is rural, the other is regal. Folk theatre can make a whole community take part. The classical is for the chosen few. The folk has mass appeal and caters to the lowest common denominator, the ordinary man. The classical is for the elite and demands previous knowledge from the spectator. The folk theatre has a universality which the classical lacks.'[13]

THE FOLK THEATRE:

The folk theatre, because it grew up in villages, it delineates the realistic picture of life of the rustics–their customs and beliefs, their skills and talent, their ideals and the values of life. Therefore, we can say that the folk dramas act as a mirror to the essence of rural life. Here lies the life and soul of the Bayalatas Though it is based on the traditional elements, it has undergone several changes in its form. Though the various folk dramas, spread across our country, look different because of their regional differences, the internal thread that binds them together is the same. Their unity in diversity is

astounding. The selection of stories of great men from our legends for their theme and an ever - awakened social consciousness are the two common qualities that we may find in the folk theatre of our country.

Though we may conclude that the theatre, on the whole, did not originate in religion, there are people who say that religion has played a very important role in its subsequent development. The sophisticated theatre has always stood away from the religious zone. However, it is not easy to deny the influence of religion on the folk theatre, though it does not have positive records. In some regions, the religious institutions might have encouraged it. For this, people give examples of the Yakshagana troupes working under the shelter of different temples. But the troupes that depend on the temples in this way are very few. Then, how is it possible to conclude that the folk theatre has been supported by religion?

It may be said that the folk theatre is the inevitable creation of the cultural life of common people. Is it possible to deny the fact that they had their own way of life, social environment, desires, ambitions, values and ideals? It is very much natural that they developed a strong desire to articulate the thoughts and feelings of their minds. As their feelings were given a shape in concrete forms on the stage, their life itself was reflected in it. The changes that had taken place in their life were seen in the theatre too. Therefore we have to agree that the folk theatre, instead of growing under the limited shelter of religion, developed freely in the open air, as an important part of the pastime and entertainment of the common people.

It has been observed that the festivals have boosted the folk theatre to a great extent. Perhaps there may not be any village in our country where at least one festival of some sort does not take place. Once a year, some festival of some sort, in honour of some God, does take place everywhere. The basic intention of the festival may be the worship of God. But that is to the minimum. The festival of one village is not limited to that particular village. The people of the surrounding villages come there without any kind of invitation. All of them revel together. Festivals have played very important role in the

social life of the village folks in many different ways. One cannot forget their cultural and economic backgrounds. Today the, tremendous growth of towns and cities has brought about great changes in the nature of festivals. Earlier, festivals used to be substantial trade centres. It used to be an opportunity for free exhibition of things. The village folks bought their requirements during the festivals only. That was their sole chance of purchasing things. During festivals, folk theatre developed as a means of entertainment. The troupes of professional as well as amateur artistes busied themselves to please the folks at the festivals by entertaining them.

During big festivals various troupes compete among each other to perform Bayalatas. The 'Twin Performances of Yakshagana' is very famous. At the Sonepura Festival of Bihar, which is one of the biggest festivals of our country, a number of Bayalata troupes give performances.'[14] Just because the themes of these Bayalata performances are the stories of some great characters from our legends, it is not right to connect the festivals with them and say that the religious consciousness is responsible for these Bayalata shows. Haven't the Bayalatas taken up social folk themes, though accidentally? Festival is only an excuse, an opportunity. When the purpose is to provide and receive entertainment, how far is it sensible to associate these Bayalatas with festivals and religion?

In every village, situated on the frontiers of Belgaum and Bijapur districts, they celebrate a festival called '*Okali*' playfully thowing coloured water on each other in sport in honour of Lord Hanuman. This small festival does not have a fixed, auspicious day for celebration. Almost during the period between January and June, different villages celebrate '*Okali*' on a convenient day for them. During this festival, they make arrangements for the performance of '*Shreekrishna Parijatha*'. This period brings a lot of income to the Parijatha troupes of Jamakhandi and Mahalingapura. The association between the two is so strong that the performance of Parijatha is considered inevitable for '*Okali*'. After all, what is the relationship between Lord Hanuman and '*Shreekrishna Parijatha*' or '*Sangya Balya*'? During Basavanna's festival also, they perform '*Shreekrishna Parijatha*'. During *Kamanna*'s (God of Love) festival at Devagaon near Kittur,

themes like '*Shree Nijaguna Shivayogi*', '*Allama Prabhu*' etc. have been presented so many times. During Dyamavva's festivals *Doddata (Big Play)* like '*Lankadahana*' and '*Yayathi*' have given their service. At a place called Thukkayivade near Sankeshwar, they celebrate a festival. That day the performance of '*Radhanata*' is imperative. It is said that it is customarily conducted every year. It is very clear that there is no relation between Bayalatas and festivals. Therefore they are more pleasure-oriented than being performed for a religious purpose. These festivals themselves are responsible for the growth of folk theatre. The *Thamasha* (Humour) melas of Maharashtra achieved their growth mainly through their performances at the festivals.'[15]

We cannot forget the encouragement given at the private level for the growth of Bayalatas. A number of wealthy people of prestigious families had invited such troupes for their pleasure and made them perform Bayalatas. In Uttara Pradesh and East Punjab, '*swang*' performances are arranged during wedding/weddings and birthday celebrations. It cannot be said that *Rasaleelas* are performed only during festivals and other rituals.'[16] In Brijapradesh, the connoisseurs take pleasure in arranging for Rasaleela performances of their own interest. This does not mean that the Bayalatas fully depend upon individual sponsorship. In fact, the common folk themselves are their true masters. Though the folk theatre has not depended on God or divine worship for its development, it has made use of the temples for it. The reason for this is not faith in God, but the relationship of the people with the temples. In ancient times, temples were not only the centres of worship, but also the cultural centres of the society. Just like the marriage halls of today, during those days, marriages and other rituals, trials at courts and sports and games used to take place in temples. In rural areas, we can see this even today. In several places, the Bayalata rehearsals are done only in the temples. Therefore, it is natural that the folk theatre has taken temples as its shelter right from the beginning. 'There is no doubt that temple itself was their platform in the beginning, and subsequently when the audience felt that the space was too small for them, they shifted to the open air, and hence, they came to be known as Bayalatas.'[17] In

Uttara Pradesh, in a number of temple premises at Brijapradesh, which is a centre dedicated to Lord Krishna, permanent theatres have been built for Bayalatas. They are named '*Rasamandapa's*. The *Jatra* of Bengal takes place in the temple premises. The Bayalata called '*Kariyala'*, prevalent in Himachal Pradesh, is performed at the temple of the local deity called '*Bijja Devata'*. In Kerala, they construct a stage called *'Koottambalam'* in the temple premises, for the performance of Sanskrit dramas mixed with the regional language. In Assam, the stages where dramas are performed at Vaishnava temples are called '*Bhavonathar*'.'[18] In Karnataka, Bayalatas are commonly performed in the premises of *Mutts* or temples. All these details tell us how much encouragement temples have given to the development of Bayalatas.

Notes:

1. *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences,* Vol.13, p.598
2. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* Vol.4, p.869
3. 'There is abundant evidence of the close connection of Drama with religion'-A,B. Keith, *'Sanskrit Drama'* p.40
4. Adya Rangacharya, *Bharatheeya Rangabhoomi,* p.4
5. Kenneth Macgown, *The Living Stage,* p.2
6. Sheldon Cheney, *The Theatre,* p.11
7. 'Dance is the earliest outlet for emotion and the cradle of all the arts'I.Shekhara, 'Sanskrit Drama, Its Origin and Decline' Introduction.XIII
8. Sheldon Cheney, *The Theatre,* p.11
9. 1) A.R. Krishna Shasthri, *Sanskritha Nataka,* p.7
   2) Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature,* p.292
10. Adya Rangacharya, *Bharatheeya Rangabhoomi,* p.11
11. Dr. Dasharatha Oza, *Hindi Natak, Udbhav aur Vikas,* p.48
12. 'So widespread and continuous has been the process of exchange between traditional- Classical and traditional Folk drama in India that 'Pure' features of one or the other are hard to come by'- J.C. Mathur *Drama in Rural India'* p.4

13. Balawanth Gargi, *The Folk Theatre of India,* p.3
14. J.C. Mathur, *Drama in Rural India,* p.11
15. J.C. Mathur, *Drama in Rural India,* p.11
16. J.C. Mathur, *Drama in Rural India,* p.12
17. Dr. M.S. Sunkapur, *Janapada Sahitya Darshana, Bhaga* 2. P.118
18. J.C. Mathur, *Drama in Rural India,* pp.9.10.11.

KANNADA BAYALATA (Open Air Stage Shows): THE ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVE

How old is Kannada Bayalata?

The sophisticated society fostered the art of dancing under the name of *nataka*(drama). The villagers, who stood away from the civilised society, stayed away from the *nataka* of the sophisticated people. But, does it mean that the villagers did not adopt any means of entertainment? Even though it is true that the rural folk fostered the folk theatre, positive records that define its history are not available. If the pieces of information, scattered here and there, are collected and put together, it is possible to get a vague picture of it. Several attempts have been made in this direction.

GREEK ORIGIN:

The origin of Kannada Bayalata goes back to the Greek theatre of the ancient times. 'If the divine characters in Bayalata make their entry from inside the attic, the monstrous and villainous characters come roaring and thundering from outside, and enter the attic from the front. Therefore it may be said that the Bayalatas are the contributions of the Greek. The divine characters never show their back to the audience. This is the convention in Bayalata. This resembles the entry and exit of the Gods and Goddesses in Greek Drama.'[1] But these words, mainly keeping *Moodalapaya* in view, cannot be applied to the entire folk theatre or the Kannada Bayalata. To say that Kannada Bayalata is a gift of the Greeks is purely based on imagination. Here we have to think of the extent of relationship we had with the Greeks. From some of the Kannada words in the Greek plays (2nd Century A. D.) we have come to know that ancient Karnataka had maintained relationship with the Greeks in the beginning of the Christian era. But for this, no other evidences have we got about our contact with Greece. When there are no clear proofs about

where, when and to what extent our land had contact, and give and take policies with Greece, it will be sheer imagination to say that our Bayalatas are the gifts of the Greeks. How much are we sure about the similarity in the entry and exit of characters? Even if we find some similarities, it is mere coincidence. It is a fact universally acknowledged that there are similarities in certain elements of art and literature of different countries. Man's fundamental tendencies are the same everywhere. In art, where these tendencies are naturally projected, no wonder, similarities have been found at random. We cannot come to a conclusion that one has influenced the other, holding this as our strong proof. There is a folk story in Europe similar to that our Chandrahasa. Based on this, is it correct to say that our Chandrahasa has gone to Europe, or we have imported their story?

The similarity between the two in entry and exit is only one element. In other major elements, we find a sea of difference between our Bayalata and the Greek plays. In the Greek plays, there were no characters at all in the beginning. It was a mere combination of chorus songs. Gradually, a single character was introduced. During the time of Sophocles, the number was raised to three. Later, these characters were made to speak. In the background, many people could stand and play the roles. But the speaking characters should not exceed three. The remaining characters were mute. Is it possible to find all these elements in our Bayalatas? In 2nd Century A. D., the Greek theatre had experienced a fall, after reaching the pinnacle of glory. Therefore, there is no question of its coming to our land as a gift. Moreover, the Greek plays belonged to a very rich classical theatre, undertaking its own experiments, abiding by its own poetics and ideologies. Is it possible to see its two divisions like tragedy and comedy, its three unities, its theory of catharsis put forward by Aristotle in Bayalatas? The Sanskrit scholars also have rejected the opinion that the Greek plays have influenced Sanskrit plays. On the whole, the entire Indian theatre, including the Bayalatas, is not born and brought up under the influence of other countries. 'The Indian Theatre comes up purely from within its own ways of life.'[13]

DRAVIDIAN ORIGIN:

Dr. M.S. Sunkapur has said that the Bayalatas have been originated in Greece. But, at the same time, he has also said that they are the contributions of the Dravidians. His statements are as follows:

1. Since the Bayalata theatres resemble the Greek theatres, and since performances like these are prevalent in the Dravidian regions of Andhra, Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnataka, under the names like Koochipudi, Ramanattam etc. it becomes clear that the Bayalatas are the gifts of the Dravidians. These performances are not found in North India.'[4]

2. The *Natuvas* belong to the Dravidian race. Singing, dancing and acting while dancing are the specialties of this race. Therefore it can be inferred that the concept of dance performance has come from them.'[5]

3. It has to be said that the Bayalatas originated from the Dravidians.'[6]

4. It is not untrue that the Bayalatas are of Dravidian origin.[7]

5. The Bayalatas are the gifts of the Dravidians.[8]

Thus if you observe him repeating the same words, it appears that he sticks himself strongly to this opinion. But, just like the opinion about its Greek Origin, this is also purely based on imagination. Because, it implies that the Dravidians are not Kannadigas, but a race that did not mingle with the Aryans, and they are the primitive people who had settled in South India even before the Aryans. 'Among the Bayalatas that are performed today, even the oldest ones also are not more than 140-150 years old.'[9] If so, how far is it right to take it back to the Dravidian origin? It is not possible that our Bayalatas resemble the Bayalatas like Koochipudi and Ramanttam. They are different names adopted for the Bayalatas of different regions. If there are similarities, it is a mere coincidence, and any theory cannot be evolved of it. Just because the Bayalatas like this are not there in North India, it is not correct to say that they are created by the Dravidians. Why should we expect that our Bayalatas should be there in North India too? Is there no possibility of a regional variation?

Here we have to note one thing: All the Indian Bayalatas like *Yakshagana, Thamasha, Koochipudi, Bhamakalaapa, Jathra* have taken their birth after the Middle Ages. Their age cannot go back farther than 16th Century A. D. This applies to the entire Indian folk theatre, for which Kannada Bayalata is not an exception. Therefore it is not right to say that our Bayalata is older than the North Indian variation, or that it is of Dravidian origin.

The give and take between the Aryans and the Dravidians, and all kinds of intermingling between the two had been over at the beginning of the Christian Era, and harmony had already been brought about between them by that time. These two cultures have been blended to such an extent that at present it is highly impossible to separate their individual aspects. It is true that originally the Kannadigas are Dravidians. But just because we are Dravidians, we cannot say that our Bayalatas are of the Dravidian origin. Is it possible to draw a hard and fast line and say that the Kannada culture is either Aryan or Dravidian? If that is so, saying that our Bayalatas, which never existed more than 150 years ago, are the gifts of the Dravidians, is an absurd guesswork. It is not right to say that the *Natuvars* are Dravidians, and so the Bayalatas born of them are also of the Dravidians. The people of our region have named them as *Natuvars* or *Nattuuvars* because they have taken to dance, that too classical dance, as their family heritage. Is it possible to argue with this that all the dances are of our land and they do not belong elsewhere? Besides, they have never contributed anything to our Bayalatas. The *Natuvars,* who concentrated on flattering the kings and lords and the wealthy citizens through their art, living under the royal patronage, have not even glanced at the folk art. It is true that dances have given a push to the Bayalatas. But they are folk dances. Definitely they are not the sophisticated dances of the *Natuvas.*

THE EXISTENCE OF THE BAYALATAS:

Though it may be said that the origin of the present Bayalatas may not go back to the past for more than 150 years, there is sufficient evidence to prove that the folk theatre existed in ancient Karnataka. Only that their exact form, methods of performance, use of music

and literature have not yet come to light. As in the volumes of 12th century, references to Dumb Plays and Doll Plays have been made, it is evident that the dramatic field existed to entertain the common folk. Bayalatas also existed along with these. The popular plays based on histories and legends were common too. They consisted of music, dance and dialogues.'[10] The first part of this statement is true. The later part is only an imagination. The references to Doll plays are abundantly found in *Vachana* literature (a poetic genre in Kannada, giving good messages to society) and it assures that it was familiar to the people in those days. But there are no documents available to prove that the Bayalatas based on the stories from histories and legends used to be performed in those days. The references made to '*Beedivadu*' and '*Neraviya Tumuku*' (An episode presented through string instruments in group)[12&13] by the Kannada poet Harihara, Kumaravyasa's reference to the *Nadadis* (nomads), Govinda Pai's reference to the *Nadadi* plays,' [14] and the reference to the *Goddata* in Basavapurana do not provide any clear evidences.' [15&16] In Bandhuvarma's '*Shoonya Sampadane*' (Earning of Nothing), '*Marulata*' has been used as an equivalent to *Goddata*.'[17]

PAGARANA (a loose performance based on an episode):

The fact that the '*Pagarana*', has been entertaining the rural Kannada folk, right from the olden times till today, reveals its popularity. It has been agreed by all that the verbal translation *Prakarana* > *Pagarana* > *Hagarana* appears convincing, from the point of view of their meanings. But there is a sea of difference between the *Pagarana* of Kannada and the *Prakarana of Sanskrit* . One can see the difference if the two are kept side by side, considering the background of their features:

Dhananjaya has described the features of the Prakarana in his *Dasharoopaka:*

Atha prakarane vrithamuthpadyam lokasamshrayam
Amathya vipravanijamekam kuryacha nayakam,
Dheeraprashantham sapayam dharmakarmartha
thathparam
Shesham nataka vathsandhi praveshakara saadhikam.' [18]

The theme of Prakarana is something that happens commonly in the world. Among the Manthri, Brahmana and Vaishya, one is the hero. He should be interested in *dharmarthakamas (righteousness, money and lust)* and he should have the courage and composure to face the differences of life. Dhananjaya's opinion is that in this Prakarana chapter, *Praveshaka* and *Rasa* are just as they are found in a drama. The features that Vishwanatha propounds in *Sahitya Darpana* are almost like the opinions of Dhananjaya.

Bhaveth Prakarane Vritham loukikam kavikalpitham
Shringarongi nayakasthu vipromathyothavavanika
Sapaya dharma kaparthaparo dheera prashantha[19]

Here, two extra elements have been added. 'The heroine of the Prakarana is either born in a good family or may be a prostitute, or sometimes she may be both. Paramours, slaves, gamblers, frauds and so on frauds, also appear here. The rest of the elements are as they are seen in a drama. (For example *Mrichakatika, Malathi-Madhava, Pushpa Bhooshitha)*' [20]

Prakarana sticks to these rules and features. But the features of *Pagarana* have not been written anywhere. Therefore we may conclude that *Pagarana is* a liberal play. Though there are social themes, *shringara rasa* (erotic flavour), paramours and slaves in *Pagarana* also, they do not have a fixed shape or form. It is not a well-planned, systematic play. It does not have a written script like the *Prakarana.* There is a lot of difference between the best works like *Mrichakatika* and *Malathi Madhava*, and the crude, obscene stage shows of *Pagarana* that do not have a script. There is an argument that the play *Mrichakatika* is the contribution of Karnataka. "In the Sanskrit play '*Mrichakatika*' written by Shudraka, the depiction of life appears to be that of South India and not of North India. Evidences are available in the play that the poet also belongs to South India. Therefore there is a chance to infer that he might have added a new section to the group of Sanskrit plays, by naming the same *Krithi* System performed by the common folk of Kannada region as '*Prakarana*'.'[21] But this does not seem correct. Because, there are no evidences to prove that the Kannadigas of those days

had such a refined stage convention of giving a push to a play like *Mrichakatika* or an equivalent play to that As already mentioned above, it is beyond imagination to measure *Prakarana* and *Pagarana* with the same criterion.

We may observe the words of the poet in *'Kavirajamarga' (first volume in Kannada about the qualities of poetry like prosody, rhymes, figures of speeches, etc.)*[22]. In such creations, the combination of letters, which is the cause of complication, becomes inevitable many a time. Since all the three remaining flaws in the visual poetry, (e.g. *Mrichakatika)* are humorous, they do not seem to be defects.'[24] These words have been interpreted to be applicable to Kannada *Pagarana*. We should bear in mind the opinion expressed by *Kavirajamarga* poet Sreevijaya while discussing the flaws in poetry. But how can we apply the rules applied to the written scripts like dramas to Pagarana, which does not have a script? The words of Sreevijaya may be applicable to a visual poetry like *Mrichakatika*, but not to the *Pagarana* of Kannada, which stands so far away from *Prakarana*. There are no evidences to prove that Pagarana had the form that would be bound to the features and rules at the time of the *Kavirajamarga* poet. Therefore it becomes clear that the *Kavirajamarga* poet had the sophisticated form of Sanskrit *Prakarana* in his mind and not the folk form like the Pagarana of Kannada. Nayasena refers to *Pagarana* and says that *Pagarana* is not bound by features and rules.'[25] Therefore one has to think of the possibility that the Sanskrit *Prakarana* might have become the humorous *Pagarana* and was in practice in *Kannadanadu*.' (Kannada Land)[26] But this also is a feeble argument, 'One gets the impression that *Pagarana* is a sort of open air drama, where speech is subordinate to costumes and acting'[27]. This statement is not completely true. Though costumes and acting are of primary importance in *Pagarana*, one cannot say that it is an open air drama. *Pagarana* does not have the systematic presentation method that an open air drama has.

From this argument, it becomes clear that it is of no use searching for the origin of *Pagarana* in *Prakarana*. *Pagarana* is the original creation of the Kannadigas. It is the contribution of this land. Just

because of the similarity in the form of words, one cannot take it to Sanskrit origin. The drama concept of the Kannadigas has always remained different from that of the Sanskrit drama. Similarly, *Pagarana* has adopted its own independent form and features.

The first description of *Pagarana* is the story of sage Karthikeya in *Vaddaradhana (the first available prose work in Kannada)*. In that story the king announces that he would award a prize to the one who makes the weeping queen called Veerashree (who had lost her brother) laugh.'[28] This description says that Pagarana is a series of peculiar characters, wearing peculiar costumes, in disguise. It makes it very clear that there is no relation between this and the features of Pagarana described by Dhananjaya, who was the contemporary of Vaddaradhana. Unlike the Prakarana of Sanskrit, the Pagarana of Kannada was never performed systematically on the stage, but chose the streets as its fixed abode. The contexts for the performance of the rest of the *roopaka* (dance drama) modes have not been discussed here. The discussions on *Pagarana,* which is particularly presented on certain festivals, are made in further pages.

Though Pagarana is limited to fixed contexts, there are sufficient evidences to show that it was partially a performance on the stage on special occasions. From the description in *Vaddaradhana*, it becomes clear that *Pagarana* used to be performed during '*Badubbe* Festival'[29]. There is no doubt that the Kannadigas had followed the convention of celebrating the *Badubbe* Festival, as mentioned by the writer of *Vaddaradhana*.

In one of the verses of Chennabasavanna,'[30] we have a clear record of the special *Hagarana* performed at the *Kara-hunnime (on full moon day)* festival. About the *Hagarana* being performed at present in connection with *Holihunnime* festival, Dr. Chidananda Murthy has elaborately discussed.'[31] It is being celebrated in some villages of Kumta Taluk in the Uttara Kannada District. When there are five days remaining to the *Holihunnime* day, they disguise themselves under various costumes and masks, go on dancing and singing along the streets, and at the end go to the temple.'[32] In the surrounding villages of Chennamma's Kittur, *Hagarana* is being

performed throughout the *Shravana (August)* month. The people of this region do not call it *Hagarana*, but call it *'Sogu'* (disguise). Every evening they disguise themselves in different forms and go about all the lanes, and at last come back to the same house where they have started from, and strip off their guises. 'Horse guise, *Rayanna* guise, *Mayi* guise, *Gidda Balya* guise, husband-wife guise, *Sahukar* guise, *Jogathi* guise, *Bekkabadi* guise, marriage guise - are the major guises they go in and the villagers get opportunities to enjoy watching four-five guises on the same day. On the last Monday of the *Shravana* month, the people of the lane wear a big guise. *Rayanna,* Horse, Mayi etc. are the important big guises. Rehearsal is done only for the last day. The rest are managed through convention, imitation and experience. The convention of performing this *Pagarana* is there during some festivals.'[33] In Haladipur Village of Kumta taluk there is a festival called *Devi Kanahunnime* festival. *Hagarana* is performed there on the previous night. The people in the guise of social and legendary characters move in the procession, dancing and singing. Some legendary episodes are enacted with dialogues. But none of them is systematic. It is not possible to see or hear everything. The performance is filled with dialogues of low taste. When poojas are conducted on special occasions, *Hagaranas* are held at private or personal expenses.'[34] Then the artistes of *Hagarana* are invited by offering betel-nuts to them, which is a sign of honour. The master of the house makes arrangement for pendal, lighting, colour, etc. The social or legendary characters come on to the stage one by one, sing, dance and go back. Little episodes are enacted with songs and speeches. It is common that those songs and speeches are filled with lewdness and obscenities according to the taste of those people. On the whole, these are licentious shows which are performed liberally, without any seriousness.

Since the *Pagaranas* contain traditional songs and dances and extempore speeches, they do not demand any rehearsal. Still the practice of rehearsing for some important episodes is observed among them. It has been noticed that there were 'rehearsal houses' reserved specially for *Pagaranas*. An epigraph tells us about the endowment of a house for *Pagarana* rehearsal.'[35] If the *Pagarana* performers

are invited by offering betel-nut, does it not mean that they are well-versed and experienced in the art? It is already mentioned that the performers of '*Sogu's*' of *Shravana* month do the rehearsals prior to the performance. But the rehearsal of *Pagarana* does not involve any discipline or hard work unlike a drama. At the most, they make a preparation of 8-10 days.

Some of the methods of presentation of *Pagarana* have been introduced now. Street-side itself is the stage for *Pagarana.* Since it is a mobile show, it is impossible to raise a pendal for it in a fixed place. Those who arrange it privately may do it in front of their house. There are a variety of characters in it. The costumes are more or less similar to that of a drama. The intention of social characters may be light humour, satire or sarcasm. These characters and episodes keep the social consciousness of the villagers alert. Nayasena's words 'It is like shaving the beard, moustache and head for a *Pagarana* of three days'[36] make it clear that in *Pagarana* the women roles used to be enacted by men. Even today the same practice exists. During Nayasena's time it used to be done for three days. Maybe, for three days those performers used to remain in their costumes! Masks are used for the roles of Gods, monsters and animals. *Vaddaradhane* has referred to 'people coming with the wooden masks.'[37] The masks of lion, bear, horse, monster, goddess etc. are used today also. There were villagers who used to prepare in their own crude manner crowns, swords, discs, bows and arrows, using their artistic skills. 'The *nomads'* hood'[38] used in dramas mentioned by Kumaravyasa, undoubtedly suggests the shape of artificial snakes used in *Pagarana.*

The *Pagarana* that presented a comic character in costumes and makeup during the time of *Vaddaradhana,* went on changing its meaning, and now stands at commotion and disorder.'[39] Its absurd, distorted guises and its stage on the street side have made it a clamorous market place. Since its sole aim was to make people laugh, it gave a lot of scope for lewdness and obscenity. Hence people came to the conclusion that *Pagarana* is not a show for decent and respectable people, and for women too. '[40] But when we see that without caring for any of these, *Pagarana* has continued to maintain the tradition in its own way, we may understand its impact and

influence on the villagers. *Pagarana* might not have directly given an inspiration to Bayalata. But so many aspects *of Pagarana* are found in Bayalata. Since the story of Bayalata comes from classical literature, it has to move systematically in a particular line. It does not normally contain the comic episodes, having an organic relationship with the main story. For giving the pleasure of humour to the audience '*adasogu's* entered the Bayalatas. There is no difference between these '*adasogu's* and the characters of *Pagaranas*. The folk elements that could be pointed out in Bayalatas are these '*adasogu's*. Had these '*adasogu*'s not there, Bayalatas would have become insipid. Thus the *Pagaranas* have taken their place in Bayalatas, though in disguise. The buffoons in Bayalatas like *Doothi, Arathi, Laya* etc. are the replicas of the characters in *Pagarana*.

***VESHAGARAS*:** (Actors disguising themselves with makeup and costumes on them)

The *Veshagaras* are mobile professional artistes. Though the *Veshas* (costumes and makeup) of these artistes, spread across the length and breadth of our region, are more or less like those of the *Pagarana* characters, differences could be found between the two to a certain extent. Since putting on *Veshas* is the means of their livelihood, and since they have got this art in them as tradition, one can see the systematic arrangement, set dialogue and the songs made byheart. Reference to *Veshagaras* has been made by Chenna-Basavanna in two of his *vachanas (pithy sayings).*'[41]

The *Vachanas* say that the *Veshagaras* used to make speeches by heart, and that putting on *Veshas* was a means of earning their livelihood.'[42] In Rathnakara Varni's *Bharthesh Vaibhava* also there are references to different kinds of *Veshas*. Two dancers called Roopani and Padmani, when they accuse Bharathesh of not watching their dance, talk to each other referring to '*Veshas*'. '[43&44] Moreover, they refer to different *Veshas* like *Binuguvesha*, *Ganduvesha*, and the *Veshas* of *Labourers* '[45] The fact that they have been exemplified in a mocking way, undoubtedly suggests that the *Veshas were* meant to entertain the common folk. In the eyes of the sophisticated, these were of cheap taste. For establishing the ancient quality of the

Vehagaras, Seetharama Jagirdar provides the evidence of an epigraph at Pattadakallu, which says that the 'warriors received the honours, which are usually received by the *Gandharvas*.'[46] Jagirdar's opinion is that these *Gandharvas* are *Veshagaras*.'[47] But this is not correct. *Gandharvas* are musicians. No evidences have been found to prove that *the Gandharvas* are *Veshagaras*. Hence the *Gandharvas* mentioned in the epigraphs cannot be the *Veshagaras*.

The *Veshagaras* are also called *Jathigaras*. Though they have got a place of their own for their dwelling, they spend most of their time in moving from place to place. Four-five people, belonging to one family, raise a tent outside the village or town, along with their horses and other cattle. They stay at a place for 15-20 days at the most. Everyday they put on different *Veshas*. These *Veshas* are also called *Sogus* in some places.

These *Veshas* are related to legendary and historical contexts. The one who puts on the guise of Sarvajna, (the great kannada poet of 16th century) recites three to four hundred *Thripadis* (3 lined verses) of Sarvajna byheart. They spend about half an hour in front of prestigious houses of important places, delivering speeches and singing songs related to the *Veshas*. After this they move forward. Three to four role-players are there. Three to four background players are there who play on *harmonium*, *tabla* and other instruments. The *Ardhanari* (half woman) is their distinct *Vesha*. The same person puts on the *Vesha* of Shiva on his right and Parvathi on his left side, and covers half portion of his face with a veil, and turns the veil on the other half part of his face in a skilful manner. Everyday they do not ask for reward. As the last attraction of their camp, they wear the guise of a *magician*. That day they receive money and other rewards either by begging or by demanding. We may observe the influence of these *Veshagaras* in the costumes and makeup of the characters of the *Bayalatas*. But to say that 'the Bayalatas are originated among the groups of *Veshagaras*'[48] is an exaggeration.

The *Bahuroopis* (Those appearing in many forms):

Though the *Veshagaras* and *Bahuroopis* look alike in their profession, there are a number of differences between the two in

their profession and custom. The *Bahuroopis*, who had been popular once, all over *Kannadanadu*, are not of an 'ordinary' class unlike the *Veshagaras*. It has to be noted that this art has developed under the patronage of the *Veerashaiva* religion. It appeared during the period of the *Shivasharanas*, sustained for four to five centuries, and seems to have vanished after that. Or, losing its distinct qualities, it possibly might have got mixed up with the *Veshagara*'[49] tradition.

A contemporary of the *Vachana* poets of the 12th Century called Chaudayya was popularly called '*Bahuroopi* Chaudayya'. He has written two verses'[50&51] in which he has referred to his profession of a Bahuroopi.

Some recent literary works supply more information about Chaudayya's *Bahuroopi* skills. The first one among them says that Chaudayya was the son of Janasevya and Dharmarathi. He was an adept in Bahuroopi skills through which he encouraged the devotees of Shiva to work hard. At this time, there was a small kingdom called Kotegiri, and its king was Ramadeva. At his court, a man called Achyutha, the son of Bhaskara Bhatta, learnt the skills of *Jathigaras* like singing and dancing, and received a title from the king, of Ganavidya Gajendra Simha. The story says that there was a competition between Achyutha and Chaudaya, where Achyutha exercised his skills of eighteen types, wearing the guises of a hundred and one families, but he failed in his speech and also in music and dance; and Chaudayya defeated him'[52] and received all the titles of Achyutha. This throws light on a number of things. Chaudayya has been evidently called a *Bahuroopi*. He is the devotee of Shiva. Achyutha, the *Jathigara*, is a *Vaishnava*. Thus the story says that the *Bahuroopis* and *Jathigaras* were rivals. In the further part of this story, Shiva comes to Chaudayya in the form of a juggler called *Yakanatha* to test him, stands for a competition with him, and presents the ten *avataras* of Lord Vishnu.'[53] Against him Chaudayya performs Lord Shiva's 25 *leelas (plays)* and wins over the *Vaishnavas*. It shows that the *Bahuroopis* have augmented their capacity to exhibit their skills through music. This context suggests the rivalry between *Shaivas* and *Vaishnavas*, through the *Bahuroopis* and *Jathigaras*.

The same story has been referred to in the *Hanthi verses* named '*Jathigara Chaudayya*', edited by Dr. Gadgimutt.'[54] Though the story seems to be the same, it should be noted that Chaudayya has been called *Jathigara* here. The ballad (Jathigara Chaudayya, the Intelligent *Shivasharana*, verse-15) is a recent one. This reinforces the inference that the *Bahuroopis* have changed themselves into *Jathigaras*.

The *Sharana* called '*Laughing Marayya*' might have been a *Bahuroopi*. It is said that he used to donate free meals to people, collecting money from the devotees of Lord Shiva, by entertaining them with his humour. He had taken it as his duty to make others laugh.'[55] Nayasena says that 'the *Bahuroopis* used to change themselves every moment'.'[56] Chenna Basavanna has written a verse describing the costumes and makeup of the *Bahuroopis.'*[57] Though the *Sharana* called Kalaketha Bommayya, referred to in *Basavapurana*, has not been openly called a *Bahuroopi*, it will not be a mistake if he is taken as one, because he performs humourous roles, with his costumes and makeup, his behaviour and profession. Two verses of *Basavapurana* give sufficient details about his appearance, adornments and elegance.'[58&59]

The *Bahuroopis* were not completely folk artistes. They had created a sort of refined environment to their *Veshas* by learning and practising music, dance and speeches. Therefore their shows had reached the King's court too.

Govinda Vaidya's statement that:

The series of *Bahuroopi* performances
Filled with humourous flavour
Shone in the court that day'[67]

confirms the above said view. Though the *Bahuroopis* do not exist directly before us today, as the common folk had been fascinated towards their garbs, apparels and their witty dialogues, indirectly they might have got merged with our folk theatre. We can never deny the role played by the *Bahuroopis* in building up the Bayalatas of today.

Notes:

1. Dr. M.S. Sunkapura, *Kannada Rangabhoomi-Andu-Indu,* p.5,6.
2. S.V. Ranganna, *Paschatya Gambheera Natakagalu,* p.37 (Footnotes)
3. Adya Rangacharya, *Bharatheeya Rangabhoomi,* p.7
4. *Janapada Sahitya Darshana,* Bhaga 3,p.119
5. *Kannada Rangabhoomi-Andu- Indu,* p.3
6. Ibid, p.6
7. Ibid, p.4
8. *'Thiruneelakantha, Prasthavane,* p.iv
9. Dr. Krishnasharma Betageri, *Kannada Janapada Sahitya,*p.3
10. Karnatakada Parampare, Samputa 1, p.578
11. Girija Kalyana, 1-30
12. *Kumarvyasabharatha- Karnaparva,* 24-30
13. *Kumaravyasabharatha- aranyaparva,* 13-42
14. Ka,Sa. Parishath Pathrike, 31, 32, p.54
15. *Basavapurana,*23-75
16. *Jeevasambodhane,* p. 5-36
17. *Gummalapura SidhalingadevaraShoonyasampadane,*p.420
18. *Dasharoopaka* (Tr. K.V. Subbanna) , 3-29,40
19. Udhaitha, *The Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary,* Ed.V.S. Apte, p.637
20. A.R. Krishnashasthri, *Samskritha Nataka,* p.33
21. Dr. Krishnasharma Betageri, *Kannada Janapada Sahitya,* p.75
22. Kavirajamarga, 1-68
23. M.V. Seetharamayya, Ka.Ma. Tippani, p.148
24. Dr. M. Chidananada Moorthi, Pra.ka. 55-4, p.50(Moorthi's article on 'Pagarana (Hagarana)- Ithihasadalli matthu Samakaleenadalli' is long and thought provoking. I have used many of the points discussed in it with gratitude. The reference to Pra.Ka. 54-4 made in the further part is suggestive of the same article)

25. Dharmamritha-5-103(26) M.V. Seetharamayya *Kavirajamarga-Ti,* p.148.
26. M.V.Seetharamayya, *Kavirajamarga-Tippani,* p.148
27. Dr. M. Chidananda Moorthi, *Kannada Shasanagala Samskrithika Adhyayana,* p. 465
28. *Vaddaradhane,* p.118
29. Dr. M. Chidananda Moorthi, Pra.Ka. 55-4, p.49
30. *Chennabasavannanavara Vachanagalu,* p.96
31. Pra.Ka.55-4, pp.60,61
32. I have heard that a similar type of show takes place at Mavinakoppa of Belagaum District on the day of Holihunnime festival. I have not got the exact details.
33. Dr. M.Chidanandamoorthy, Pra.Ka. 55-4, p.53
34. Ibid.p. 61, 62
35. Dr. M.Chidanandamoorthy, Pra.Ka.55-4, p. 53
36. *Dharmamritha,* 10-67
37. *Vaddaradhane,* p.118
38. Kumaravyasa Bharatha, *Aranyaparva,* p.13, 41
39. Dr. M. Chidanandamoorthy has explained the changes in the meaning of Pagarana subsequently.
40. *'Pagarana(da) ..desebhogaveeyalagadu vadhum',* Madanathilaka, 8-29
41. *Chennabasavannanavara Vachanagalu,* p.502
42. Ibid, p.602
43. Bharatheshavaibhava, Thandavavinayasandhi,p.51
44. Ibid, p.52
45. Ibid, p.53
46. *Kabbinahalu,* p.115
47. Ibid, p.115
48. Somashekhara Imrapoora, *Hanumantha Lingadharane Prasthavane,* p.10
49. H.M. Dasaguptha says that Bahurupa was there in Maharashtra. It is said that once a Bahurupa artiste of Maharashtra went to Ourangazeb's court, and acting like a tiger killed a court messenger

and took his revenge. However, would Ourangazeb leave him like tha? He told him to act like 'Sathi' and pushed him into the funeral pyre ans forced him to Sahagamana. Taken from H.K. Ranganath's The Karnataka Theatre, p.38 (Foot note)

50. *Vachana Sahitya Sangraha,* p.583
51. *Vachana Sahitya Sangraha* p.583
52. *Bhairaveshwara Kavyada Kathamanisoothra Rathnakara,* sam.1, p.222, 223
53. *Bhairaveshwara Kavyada Kathamanı Soothra Rathnakara,* Sam. 1, p. 223
54. *Kannada Janapada* Geethagalu, p. 286, 295
55. *Bhairaveshwara Kavyada Kathamani Soothra Rathnakara,* Sam.1, p. 214
56. *Dharmamrıtha,* p.4-46
57. *Chennabasavannanavara Vachanagalu,* p. 922
58. *Basavapurana,* p. 28.3
59. *Basavapurana,* p.21.4
60. *Kanthirava Narasaraja Vijaya,* p. 21-117

THE RISE OF YAKSHAGANA

The Creation of the Middle class:

The sophisticated people of Kannadanadu fostered their own distinct 'dramatic' tradition following the model of the Dance Drama. The village folk received their entertainment through art forms like *Pagarana*. The socio-cultural and economic gap between the people of these two classes continued with the art forms fostered by them. But, being pressed between the two opposite banks of civilisation, which were like North Pole and South Pole, those who suffered were the Middle class. They did not have a place in the sophisticated environment, and they felt it below their dignity to sit among the common folk. 'Drama' was too expensive and '*Pagarana*' was too cheap. So, they felt the need of a theatre, congenial to their thinking, culture and mentality. They were directly influenced by the publicity of *Sharana* and *Dasa* literature, because, the disciples neither had the time to sit listening to the songs and verses of the devotees of Hara and Hari, nor did they reach the minds of the lower class people. The study of standard literature was out of reach for the middle class, and they sneered at folk literature. In this context it was natural that *the Vachanas* of the *Sharanas* and the songs of the *Dasas* had a fascinating influence on them. *Shatpadi* (six-lined verse) and *'Sangathya'* became their medium. This gave opportunities to the middle class people for creative writing. Thus the scarcity of literature and drama among the middle class gave rise to the Yakshagana. It may be said that, in the beginning, Yakshagana was created by the representative poets for fulfilling the needs of the middle class. Subsequently, though it rose to the royal patronage occasionally, since it fascinated the common folks more, it gave rise to the saying 'since it fell down to the open air, it became a Bayalata, and a folk art.'[1] Even though there are umpteen controversies about the birth, form and features of Yakshagana, it can never be denied that it is the creation of the middle class. Yakshagana has filled up the vacuum in Kannada, caused by the scarcity of drama. This distinct theatrical genre became more popular than the usual Sanskrit dramas

YAKSHAGANA – THE ETYMOLOGY:

The traditional interpretation that it is the music created and fostered by the Yakshas, is as romantic an imagination as the belief in the existence of Yakshas and Gandharvas. It is impossible to think of any relationship between Yakshagana and the Yakshas.

EKKALAGANA:

The word '*Ekkalagana*' which comes in Kannada poetry, has been interpreted by the great writer Muliya Thimmappayya as follows: '*Ekkalagana'* (Yakshagana) was the *Bhagavatha* (background singer), who controlled the show performed by the troupe consisting of different *Veshadharis*. This show was called *Nalpagarana*. The Jains called Yakshandol'[2]. But it is not right to say that the three different independent genres – *'Ekkalagana*, *Nalpagarana* and *Yakshandol* – are one and the same. *Nalpagarana (Pagarana*) has already been discussed as a folk art. If we consider the usage of the expression '*Ekkalagana'*, it is possible to establish why *Ekkalagana* cannot be the same as *Yakshaganacharya*.

There are two different instances in *Vardhamana Purana*'[3] and *Chandraprabha Purana*'[4] both of which are of the clear opinion that *Ekkalagana* is a classical singer, singing to the accompaniment of *Vaadya (a musical instrument)* and *Thaala (rhythm)*. It is not right to say that this kind of a musician is considered as *Yakshaganacharya* (today's *Bhagavatha*). Someshwara says that 'Yakkalagana' is gifted singer, singing alone, without the background of accompaniments. In Sanskrit he is called *'Ekkalagayaka'*.'[5] It may be said that these features are only half-truths for the Kannadigas, because the earlier two examples have already confirmed that the *Ekkalaganas* used to sing to the accompaniment of musical instruments. Just like the Kannada drama differed from the Sanskrit drama, it is not surprising to find some small differences in the features of *Ekalagana*. It is true that *Ekkalagana* must have got changed into *Ekalagana* or Yakshagana later on. *'Eka'*, of course may become '*Ekka'*. But *'Yaksha'* cannot become *'Ekka'*. At the most, *'Yaksha'* may become *'Jakka'*. Therefore the meaning becomes clear that

Ekalagana is *Ekagana or* a single singer.'[6] But, he is in no way connected to Yakshagana.

YAKSHANDOLANA (Andolana=Movement):

We have seen the attempts of Muliya Thimmappayya to make *Ekkalagana* the *Bhagavatha,* and to interpret *'Yakshandolana'* through *Nalpagarana.* It is not right to connect Yakshagana to *Yakshandolana,* which is a distinctive dance form, referred to in the Jain legendary poetry. The word 'Yakshandolana' coming in *Mallinatha Purana'*[7] has been interpreted by Tha. Su. Shamarao as follows:

The word '*Yakshandola'* coming in this poetry could be the '*Chappara Manchadata'* of Yakshagana. This is a sort of dance performed by a woman character. This dance, which is performed, holding the screen across upto the waist, dancing at the lower part of the attic, is also called by names like *Attaligeyata*, *Marakalinata*, and *Arepavinata*. When the *amari* women (of heaven, the realm of Indra), in the arms of Amarendra (Indra) perform dance in this manner, it is very much natural that it reminds us of Yakshagana.'[8] The statement that the classical dance of Indra, commonly appearing in Jain legends, reminds us of the Yakshagana episode, which had not seen the light of day at that time, is sheer imagination, because Indra's dance is of a matured style following the lines of classical rules.

The *Mallinatha Purana*, in its next verse,'[9]refers to another thing. It says that Indra performed a variation of Thandava dance (performed by Lord Shiva) to the accompaniment of the musical instruments. When it is clearly said so, how far is it right to relate it to Yakshagana episode, imagining that it is another *'Chappara Manchadata'*? There is a stone image at Shravanabelagola, at Bhandari Basadi, under the caption *'Indra Nritya'*. It gives a clear picture of *Yakshandolana.* It is an image in a dancing pose. On its both sides, there are, women playing musical instruments.'[10] It must be Yakshandola. But how far is it correct to call this sophisticated dance episode *Chappara Manchadata*?

As there is the possibility of '*Yaksha'* becoming *'Jakka'*, '*Yakshandola'* can become *'Jakkandola'*. Nagachandra has

described Indra's dance episode as *'Yakshandola'* and Janna has described the same as *'Jakkandola'*. These two instances'[11&12] prove that Yakshandola and Jakkanadola are one and the same. Though it is a classical dance, its clear form has not been retained today. There is a dance form called *Jakkari,* which belongs to the Greeks.'[13] Will there be any relationship between that and this? Why can't Yaksha have become *Jakka* or *Jakkari?* Whatever it may be, it cannot be connected to the Yakshagana episode.

Dr. Shivarama Karanth has admitted that Yakshagana is a musical tradition. He has expressed his opinion long back that just like Uttaradi and Dakshinadi which are the two refined musical styles of our country, are born from Shatjagrama and Madhyamagrama respectively, Yakshagana, which is an independent musical style, has come from *Gandharagrama*. However, he himself has rejected this idea at a later stage, and there is no need to discuss it here.'[13a]

The Origin of Yakshagana in *Thaala, Vaadya and Geetha:*

Bheemrao Chitaguppi has attempted to find the origin of Yakshagana in the genre of Thaala-Vaadya-Geetha (rythm, tune and song). According to him, 'The word Yaksha in Yakshagana is a refined native word having the same meaning as *Thaala (rhythm).'*[14] This makes it clear that Yakshagana originally was a musical style sung to the rhythm of a native *thaala*.'[15] *'Yakkadiga'* is the one who is holding the *thala*. Here the '*Yakka*' could be better interpreted as the origin of Yakshagana, rather than the Kannada form of Yaksha.'[16] Thus Chitaguppi has strengthened his statement. His words could be interpreted as follows: '*Yakka' i*s a *thala*, the one who plays on it is *Yakkadiga* and *Yakkadiga*'s singing is Yakshagana. There is the possibility of *Yakka or Akka* being a percussion instrument. In *'Vaddaradhane',* the reference to *Akka* should be noted.'[17]

Chitaguppi puts forth another opinion that in Sanskrit, the rhythmic music used to be called *Yathigeetha*'[18] and these were the *Jathigana, Jathana,* and *bhajane songs*. Further, one may arrive at meanings like *Yathigana, Jathigana, jathana, jakkagana* and *yakshagana*. The *desi* (folk) word *jakka,* which is equivalent to *Yathi,* must have become *Yaksha* in Sanskrit, and when combined

with *gana(music)*, it must have become 'Yakshagana'.'[19] Why can't it be that through this view, the *Jakkulas* of Andhra when Sanskritised, became *Yakshas?* Though the words '*Yaksha*' and '*Gana*' in '*Yakshagana*' are Sanskrit, we may consider them the Sanskritisation of the native words because, in Sanskrit, there is a genre in the name of Yakshagana. Therefore Chitaguppi says that it is the Sanskritised form of *Jakka*, a word created by the scholars. Chitaguppi's opinion,'[20] which tries to find the origin of the Yakshagana standing at a distance from the influences of the traditional definition, is appropriate and acceptable. But his attempt to consider Yakshagana as the *Sathala Geetha* (rhythmic song), mentioned by Bharatha, seems to be in vain.'[21] It has been already confirmed that Yakshagana is a singing style, which came after Bharatha, and it is a purely native style. So, there is no question of it having any relation with the *Sathala Geetha* of Bharatha. Even if some common elements are there, it is coincidental.

POOJA PRABANDHA (An Essay on Worship):

Kukkila Krishna Bhatta has tried to justify that Yakshagana is a *Pooja Prabandha*. 'During the glorious age of the Vijayanagara Empire, the service of music and dance used to be offered at the temples of Andhra and Karnataka by the influence of *Vyasakoota, Dasakoota* and *Veerashaiva Haradasa Koota*. In them, in the place of Sanskrit *Pooja Prabandha*, the works in Telugu and Kannada languages came to be performed under the name of 'Yakshagana'. Its meaning was *Pooja Prabandha*. The actual meaning of the word '*Yaksha*' is nothing but *Pooja* *Yaksha Poojayam* (Panini). Gana is a musical essay also. Sharngadeva himself has clarified it in his *Sangetha Rathnakara*.'[22] This is his argument. It cannot be denied. He has given a list of different usages of the word 'Yaksha' with regard to Pooja – *Yaksha Gandha, Yaksha Kardama, Yaksha Dhoopa*, etc. Identifying the usage of the word 'Yaksha' with the meaning of Pooja in our cultural tradition, he says: 'It seems the *Deepavali* festival is also called *Yaksharathri*, perhaps with the meaning of Pooja. It is a worship of lights throughout the night. During this night, *Gopooja* (worship of the cow), *Lakshmi Pooja, Bali*

Pooja and other *Poojas* are also performed. Further, it may seem natural that the divine Yakshas also got their names with the meaning 'those who are engaged in the worship of God.'[24] The custom of performing *Prabandhagayan (singing of essays)* during the time of worship at temples had been there from a long time. It looks natural that these essays have been converted from Sanskrit into Kannada during the *Bhakti* Movement. That tradition itself might have got the name '*Thalamaddale (*interpretation of the yakshagana verses by different artistes sitting together*)*. This convention is still practised in the temples of Thulunadu. There, the artistes are called '*Padarthis'*. These are adepts, by tradition, in both Thalamaddale and Yakshagana.'[25] It means that the '*Thalamaddale'* performance, which had been continued by them by way of tradition, might not have had the purpose of entertainment in the beginning as it is now, but was a part of God's worship. An epigraph found at the Laxminarayana temple of Somasamudra in Bellary district strengthens the above opinion. This epigraph says that, free gifts were given to two Brahmins for their *Thalamaddale* service. So, it proves that the *Thalamaddale* performances were performed there in the very same way as they were done at Thulunad temples. These *Pooja Prabandhas* were subsequently called by their Sanskrit name *'Yakshagana'*. As far as we know today, before it came to our place, it had been referred to in the matured literary works of Andhra. Shreenatha Kavi who lived during the first half of the 15th Century, in his epic called '*Bhimeshwara Purana'* has said that at the Daksharama Temple on the Godavari coast, which is known as Dakshina Kashi, the worship Yakshagana music used to take place before Lord Bheemeshwara. (A-3-63)…Thirupathi Annamacharya, in his volume '*Sankeerthana Lakshana'* (Features of Music Worship) has described the features of Yakshagana, what the music teacher has told about the number and variety of verses in that *Prabandha*.'[26] The Yakshagana works had been written earlier in Telugu than in Kannada. The epigraph found in Bellary district, in the Andhra border, tells us about the *Thalamaddale* tradition. These two evidences support Krishna Bhat's statement that the name *Yakshagana* was given for the first time to the *Pooja Prabandha* of Andhra. During the Vijayanagara rule, since Andhra and Karnataka had come closer to each other politically

and culturally, they were influenced by each other, and that was how the 'Yakshagana' of Andhra came to Karnataka.

YAKSHAGANA – A MUSICAL STYLE:

There might be differences of opinion with regard to the origin of the word 'Yakshagana'. But everybody agrees that it is a musical style. In ancient books, 'Yakshagana' has not been referred to anywhere. This can be said to be the contribution of the *Bhakthi* Age. Yakshagana is a bifurcation of classical music.'[27] Subsequently, it became a folk tradition, adding regional variation to it. There are evidences in Telugu poetry to prove that during the 17th century, it received the honour of classical music. The Telugu Yakshagana poet Adibhatta Narayanadasa has given the features of Yakshagana that it is also a musical composition, which could be sung with various *swaras, ragas* and *alapas* based on classical rules.'[28] It is said that the Yakshagana musical style had gained its ripeness during the time of Thanjavoor *Nayakas* (rulers). Thanjavoor Raghunatha's concubine Ramabhadrambe had written a book called *'Raghunathabhyudaya'*. Once when he visited her inner sanctum, he saw the women sitting together singing Yakshagana. This context is described in Ramabhadrambe's work.'[29]

From the book we come to know that those women were singing the two-lined Yakshagana verses to the tune of a veena called *Ravanahastha*. In those times, Yakshagana used to be a musical essay consisting of *Dwipadis* (Two lines) and used to be sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments. To support this, there is one more example. The court poet Chengalvalakavi of Vijayaraghava Nayaka of Thanjavoor has described in his poetry called *'Radhavilasa'* the way in which Yakshagana verses were sung.

It says that the Yakshagana was sung in the court to the accompaniment of various types of musical instruments like *Ravanahastha*, *Muduku*, *dande*, *jengu*, *thaala*, etc. If it has received the honour of being sung at the King's Court, no doubt it is classical music.'[30] Because the musical instruments and the types of songs have been referred to, we come to know that Yakshagana has developed as a rich musical tradition. When we consider these

examples, the inference seems to be true that, when it was merely a song, there might have been a glorious time for it.'[31] When every tune of it was sung skillfully just like classical music, subsequently its classical features began to disappear and the folk music style sustained. Yakshas are of an inferior class to the Gandharvas. Therefore, there might be the possibility of naming the classical music of superior quality as *Gandharvagana* and the inferior folk music as Yakshagana.

It is not correct to say that the Yakshagana style is neither Uttaradi nor Dakshinadi, but a distinct style.'[32] The present style of Yakshagana may not openly resemble the classical styles of our country, Uttaradi or Dakshinadi. But its essential spirit is definitely Dakshinadi. The statement is worth thinking that 'At the time of the birth of Carnatic musical style, or even before that, it appears that Yakshagana had been a systematic, effective and fully blossomed musical style.'[33] Carnatic (Dakshinadi) music is the style improved by the *Haridasas* of Karnataka, and it is a contribution of *Bhakthi* Age. It is the speciality of that age that it came down to the middle class from the refined environment. The middle class people, who greatly relished it, formed a musical style of their own, following its model. That was named as 'Yakshagana'. Therefore there is no doubt that originally Yakshagana was Carnatic music only. Since the middle class who did not have any faith in its rules fostered it, it became free to a certain extent from the original rules and bindings of that music. It gained a new form. This novelty is the main feature, showing the separation of Yakshagana from Dakshinadi music. The statement that, 'Though the singing of Yakshagana is bound to the classical *raga* and *thala*, it has its own style in its *alapana*, *arohan* and *avarohan*, and it proves that Yakshagana is a part of classical music. Though it has got its distinctive features, it is not an independent style It is only a variation of Dakshinadi. Though Uttaradi music is only one, different traditions have been formed because of the differences in their singing styles. They have been identified as '*Gharanas*'. Similar is the case of Yakshagana. To confirm the opinion that Yakshagana is different from and independent of Dakshinadi music, Dr. Shivarama Karanth enlists some Yakshagana

ragas that are not there in Dakshinadi: *Madhumadhavi, Madhavi, Thujavanthu, Dhavalara, Adibhairavi, Ghatarava, Koravi, Thillani, Divali, Panchagathi, Nepali Gopanitha Kore Dwijavanthi, Savay Jangal Shadpadi, Jahaju Huvu Navarasa Vrindavana Mechchu,* etc.'[34] However, just because of this, Yakshagana cannot be said to be an independent style. Because, among these, three ragas called Madhavi, Dwijavanthi and Ghantarava are found in Govindacharya's Lakshanagrantha (a volume describing the features of something) called '*Sangraha Choodamani'*. '*Koravi* must be a word born out of *Kuranji*. This is also found in Govindacharya's book. If research work is done on this, there is no doubt that it is possible to get other ragas too.'[35] The above words of Bhimarao Chitaguppi are agreeable. If this is the story of the *ragas* distinctly of Yakshagana, what about the rest of the *ragas*? The other *ragas* and *thalas* of Yakshagana pointed out by Dr. Karanth are no doubt the same *ragas* in Carnatic music. It is common to sing the same *ragas* in different styles. But it is not possible to think of them as independent styles, based on this one aspect.

When the Yakshagana music style was taken by the Bayalata for its use, a lot of changes might have taken place. But that has remained alive independently, not depending only on Bayalata. Its original aspects are still alive here and there. "The *olagas (music band)* living near South and North Canara Districts in forest regions, still play the Yakshagana music. Even to this day, 'the *udayaraga' (morning tunes)* sung by old people among us is in the Yakshagana style. During the *Spirit* worship and Naga worship around Kundapura, the *Vaidyas* sing and dance, in the Yakshagana style".[36] The Koochipudi dancers living near Machalipattana and the *Thogalu Gombe* (Doll Dance.*Thogalu*=skin) performers of Kolara have retained and saved this musical tradition.'[37] The singers who sing Chennappa Kavi's '*Sharana Leelamritha'* in the Yakshagana style still exist. Sri Basavaradhya of Modur Village of Hunasur Taluk sings *Basavapurana* in the Yakshagana style. It is not in the *Gamaka style (*Recitation of Epic Verses*)*. There is no relation between *Gamaka* and his singing style.'[38] There are songs in the *Doddatas* of Haveri, Hangal and Ranebennur taluk, which could be identified as Yakshagana style. It is a musical tradition.

YAKSHAGANA – A POETIC GENRE:

In the beginning, Yakshagana was the name of a musical style, but subsequently it became a word suggesting a poetic genre. The poetic compositions that could be fitted into Yakshagana music belong to the Yakshagana genre. Almost about the 16th century *shatpadi* (six lined verse) and poetry in *sangathya style* had fully developed. They had been sung in the Yakshagana style. The given of suggestions for the *ragas* and *thalas* of *shatpadi* poetry defends this statement. Probably the singers got bored of singing those verses in the same style. Then they must have started the tradition of singing the same story in different styles. The verses composed in this way are *Yakshaganas*. One has to bear in mind that the revolutions of *Sharana* and *Dasa* poets contributed greatly to these compositions. They brought out literature from the glorious and luxurious atmosphere of palaces and the houses of *Gurus*(teachers) and installed it amidst the common people. These common people were not the lower class of the society but the middle class. As soon as the middle class people got a medium of expression, they created abundant literature using it. Therefore from the point of literary value, the quality of Yakshaganas is mediocre. These poets are not educated or qualified in the traditional system. They had widened the horizon of their knowledge zone by the close study of *Sharana* and *Dasa* literature and *Shatpadi* and *Sangathya* poetry. For most of our Yakshagana poets, the sources of their study in the beginning are *Gadugina Bharatha* and *Jaimini Bharatha*. They composed their works by gaining the capacity to easily write *Vardhaka* and *Bhamini Shatpadi* through their intensive study of those two volumes. So, *Yakshagana* should not be looked from the perspective of poetics.'[39]

The objective of Yakshagana poets was to exhibit the variety of their prosody. They made use of all the varieties of Kannada *prosodies* like *Sangathya, Dwipadi, Thripadi, Choupadi, Seesapadya, Yalapada, Shadpadi, Eile(all these are different varieties of prosodies)* etc. These varieties of *prosodies* gave rise to the varieties of singing tunes, as a result of which Yakshagana music became more charming. Therefore it will not be a mistake to say that Yakshagana is a *Champoo* (poetry with prose passages in

between). Here, the story runs only through the verses acting as linkers. Very often, prose or speech also comes in between. It is not like a *champoo* prose. These small pieces of prose are inserted to refer to the unexpected events, the entry of certain characters and divine utterances.'[40]

It does not naturally fit into the narrative, and therefore stands separately. 'The practice of using dramatics is not there in Yakshagana at all. Instead, the custom is to use poetry (which is called *Prasanga* or episode). It could be sung melodiously, and it resembles the composition of *Champoo.* This does not connect the conversations. It acts as a link between the narratives, just like other poetry.'[41]

As the Yakshagana composition was written especially for the purpose of singing, it is mainly 'poetry for singing'. These poets are aware that they are composing melodious poetry (not drama). Various poets like *Hattiyangadi Rama Bhatta (Subhadra Kalyana), Devidasa (Chitrasena Kalaga), Dhwajapura Nagappayya (Nala Charita), Parthisubba (Krishna Balaleele),'*[42] *Devidasa (Devi Mahatma), Halasinahalli Narahari Shastri (Rukmangada Charitre) and Channappa Kavi (Sharana Leelamritha)'*[43] *have referred* to the fact that the Yakshagana poetry was written in the beginning, not for the performance of Bayalatas, as is done today, but for singing. If you observe the works like '*Sharana Leelamritha'*, it becomes very clear that they will fit into any drama.

There is a work called '*Yakshagana Adinatha Purana'* (Bommanna Kavi). It is completely in the poetic form. As the word *Purana* is there at the end of this title, it is clear that it is the *Adi Purana,* written for singing in the Yakshagana style. The work begins with *Jinasthuthi.* The earlier poets like Pampa, Ranna, Nemichandra, Ponna, Janna, Madhura, Nagachandra, etc. have been remembered here. The poet declares his poetic outlook that it is 'neither the story of women, nor of thieves, but the elaborate story of the Merciful God.' Just like in the beginning of other Kannada poetry, here too there is the description of *Jambudweepa.* All these things tell us in a picturesque manner that it is poetry.'[44] This kind of musical verses have been composed on social themes too. The composition

titled 'The story of Bhaganagar called *Venkatesha Mahatme'* belongs to this category. A barren woman of Bhaganagar getting a son by the blessings of Thirupathi Thimmappa is its theme. This is not the Yakshagana they perform. No hints of that sort are given here. The story is being narrated throughout by the poet himself.'[45] The poet does not have the idea that Yakshagana can become a drama.

The first Yakshagana composition in Kannada identified so far is *'Virataparava'* written by Varamballi Vishnu. The year of its composition is 1564.'[46] There is only a guess that Purandaradasa might have written Anasuya's story and his son Madhawapathidasa might have written compositions like *Abhimanyu Kalaga, Indrajithu Kalaga, Uddalaka's story, Airavatha Kamsavadha* story etc.'[47] More evidences have not been collected. It is only to be guessed that if the manuscript of *Virataparva* had been copied in 1564, the composition of Yakshagana works must have been started about a hundred years ago. We have to note one more thing here. The first *Shoonya Sampadana* work by Shiva Gana Prasadi Mahadevayya (1420) appears to be close to Yakshagana in its formal structure. There is no such difference between them and Yakshagana composition. Instead of the Yakshagana verses, Vachanas have been edited dramatically here. It should be understood that *Shoonya Sampadana* is an undivided poetry depicting the life history of Allama *Prabhu* through *Vachanas*. At the beginning of every *sampadana* (chapter) there are introductory prose pieces introducing the characters. Since these *Vachanas* are not written with any objective, while editing the conversational part, the *sampadanakar(the writer)* has made use of his own words as the connecting link in between. It has already been discovered that all these features exist in Yakshagana too. 'It is more appropriate to name the style of *Shoonya Sampadana* as Yakshagana style than dramatic style.'[48] The tradition of singing the songs of *Sharanas* and *Dasas* has been there for a long time. Therefore it is wrong to call the *Shoonya Sampadana* of Shiva Gana Prasadi Mahadevayya the first Yakshagana of Kannada.

YAKSHAGANA – THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE:

Between the sophisticated people of the urban region and the

unsophisticated folk classes, as far as the theatre was concerned, a deep gulf had been formed in *Kannada Nadu.* The people of the sophisticated class enjoyed the plays in the dance drama form. The village folks gained satisfaction in the shows of *Veshas* like the *Pagaranas*. The middle class people, who neither came down to the level of the folk nor could rise to the sophisticated, needed a theatre of their own. To fill in this vacuum, *Yakshagana Bayalata* came into existence. At first, it was a musical style and subsequently, it was identified as a poetic genre. Later those verses went up the attic with their extempore' dialogues. The age of Kannada Yakshagana compositions might not go back farther than the 15th Century. It might have taken sufficient time for poetry to get converted to the theatrical form. The age of Yakshagana Bayalata has to be traced keeping in mind these aspects.

The words of *Aggala and Ajitharaja,* who claim to have seen Yakshagana even before the 12th Century, cannot be relied on '[49] There are no evidences to show that Yakshagana had been composed at such an early age. Then how could it be shown on the stage? King Ajithasena must have mistaken Yaksahandolana for Yakshagana.

Rathnakara Varni has described dance and dance drama shows in the Poorva *Nataka Sandhi* (Prologue) and *Uttara Nataka Sandhi* (Epilogue) of his book *Bharathesha Vaibhava*. It is meaningless to call this dance drama of a sophisticated style Yakshagana Bayalata. In Rathnakara Varni's poetry, the *Soothradhara* (Manager) who comes in *Poorvaranga* and *Uttararanga* is only a namesake *Soothradhara.* Actually he is the *Bhagavatha* of our Attic Play. The woman characters appear, dance with sarees worn in the *kase*' style. "The musical instruments like *mukhaveena, thala, maddale,* the sound of the dancing girls' anklets and the *Soothradhara* holding *thala* in his hand tell very clearly that it is the show of our own Bayalata"[50] says Tha. Su. Shamarao. But it is not true.

Dr. Shivarama Karanth also is of the same opinion. He says 'The style of the characters in his play (Rathnakara Varni), making their entry to the stage, suggest the style of the Bayalata characters'[51]. He has expressed his opinion that a hundred years before Rathnakara

Varni (who had thought that the drama *'Bharathesha Vaibhava'* was Yakshagana Bayalata), Yakshagana had come to be performed about 1457 A. D.'[52] What Rathnakara Varni had described was the dance drama form and not Bayalata. Moreover, the composition of Yakshagana works had started in his time just then. They had not come on to the stage. Therefore, the above opinions do not sound proper.

Though Dr. H. K. Ranganath says that Yakshagana Bayalata existed in 17th century itself, lack of evidences has failed to establish the fact.'[53] About 1720, Veerabhadra Nayaka gave a show before the Badshah. Pleased by this, the Badshah helped Nayaka in killing his enemies.'[54] It is said that the *Dashavathara* play was in vogue during the time of Kanthirava Narasaraja.

Govinda Vaidya has said that *Dashavathara* used to be performed in the courts of the kings. More research work should be pursued in this field to find whether these *Dashavatharas* are Yakshagana Bayalatas. The sure record of Yakshagana Bayalata shows goes like this: The Mysore kings had special liking for the Yakshagana Bayalatas. Until 1890 A.D., Yakshagana Bayalatas used to be performed everyday before Madana Vilasa Thotti Sri Nanjaraja Bahaddur.'[55] The letter written by Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar to Dharmasthala Manjayya Heggade in 1857 A.D. throws light on the age of Yakshagana Bayalata shows.[56] 'In *Angirasa Samvatsara* (1812) your Master had sent *Dashavathara* performers to us. As many of their performers were lost, and a number of actors became insufficient, he had written in the letter that you have to send your artistes.' Anyway, it shows that Yakshagana Bayalata shows had sufficiently achieved their growth by 1812. In the 19th century, the Yakshagana Bayalata troupes undertook a sort of cultural triumphal procession *(digvijaya)* all around, and as a result they had their shows in Maharashtra too.

Because it was the art of the middle class, the Yakshagana Bayalata fluctuated between rise and fall. When need arose, it rose up to the palaces, and when not needed, it wandered down the narrow lanes. There is truth in the statement that 'As it had been classical drama in

the beginning, and got into contact with the common people because of its connection with temples, subsequently it lost its royal patronage and became Bayalata, falling onto the open ground.'[57] It is not surprising that it followed the sophisticated style, in order to please the royal authorities. When the common folk took up its patronage, it got rid of its matured and serious style, and adopted simplicity. Though Yakshagana grew up, taking into its fold the qualities of *Natyashastra, Kathakkali* etc. retaining the qualities of a classical drama, the Moodalapaya, which is of the same family, has stripped itself off from the grandeur of its classical quality and has become a folk drama, moving towards the mass.

Notes:

1. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Rangabhoomi,* p.9
2. *Parthisubba*, p.42
3. *Vardhamana Purana,* 9-44 ga
4. *Chandraprabha Purana*, 7-96
5. Quoted from Bhimarao Chitaguppi, *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.216
6. Writing about '*Ekkalagana*', the editor of *'Vardhamana Purana'* says that it is the 'Ekalagayana' form of volumes of musical scriptures. Gayana means the singer as well as music. If only a single person sings, it is called Ekalagayana and if two singers sing it is called yamala and if more singers sing it is chorus. (ed.Tha.Su. Shamaraya, Pa. Nagarajayya, 'Vardhamana Purana Anubandha, p.449)
7. *Mallinatha Purana,* 13-33
8. *Kannada Nataka, p.* 37
9. *Mallinatha Purana,* 13-34
10. *Karnataka Parampare, Sam.i,* Chitra-39
11. *Ananthanatha Purana,* p.97
12. *Ananth natha Purana,* 5-98

13. Bhimarao Chitaguppi *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.216
14. 13(a) Yakshagana,p.55
15. Bhimarao Chitaguppi *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.215
16. One may remember here the system in Hindusthani music that, the style of songs which are set on Drupad and Dadara thalas are identified by the names of the same thalas.
17. *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.216
18. *Vaddaradhane,* p.80
19. *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p. 218
20. *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p. 218-219
21. Ibid, p. 219
22. Ibid, p. 217
23. *Kabbinahalu,* p. 243
24. *Kabbinahalu,* p. 244
25. It is to be noted that In *Parthisubbana Yakshaganagalu*, Introduction, p.15 also the same meaning is there. 1) Yaksha: Worship, p.776 2) Gana : a song, verse, p.403, V.S. Apte' Practical Sanskrit - English dictionary
26. *Kabbinahalu,* p.248
27. *Kabbinahalu,* p.247
28. Bhimarao Chitaguppi, *Samshodhana Panchadashi,* p. 219
29. *Kabbinahalu,* p.248
30. *Raghunathabhyudaya,* p.11-27
31. *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.226
32. *Kabbinahalu,* p. 246
33. Dr. Shivarama Karanth, *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p. 77
34. 33a)Dr. M.S. Sunkapura, *Janapada Sahitya Darshana, Part I*, p.153
35. Dr.Shivarama Karantha, *Yakshagana Bayalata*, p.63
36. (a)Ganapathi Rao Pandeshwar, *Yakshagana Kalaloka*, p.20
37. *Yakshagana Bayalata*, p.74

38. Bhimarao Chitaguppi, *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.223(Footnotes)
39. Dr. Shivarama Karantha, *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.64
40. Ibid, p.63
41. The cassette of the song sung by Basavaradhya is available in the Kannada Adhyayana Samsthe. This information was given to me by Sri T.S. Rajappa.
42. Yakshagana is poetry written rather to suit an air rather than according to the strict rules of prosody- Kittel (In the Introduction to Nagavarma's Chandassu) Quoted by K.M. Krishna rao, *Yakshagana Sahitya,* p.80
43. K.V. Subbanna, *Janapada Sahitya Darshana,* Sam.III, p.83
44. Dr. Shivarama Karantha, *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.31 (from I to IV)
45. *Kabbınahalu,* p.244(from V to Vii)
46. K.M. Krishna Rao, *Yakshagana Sahitya,* p.53
47. K.M. Krishna Rao, *Yakshagana Sahitya,* p.38
48. *Yakshagana Charithre mattu Muddana Mahakavı*, p.55
49. Bhimarao Chitaguppi, *Samshodhana Panchdarshi,* p.213
50. Dr. M. Chidananda Moorthy, *Shoonyasampadaneya Yakshaganeeya Shyli, Pra.Ka.* 58-2, p.4
51. *Kannada Rangabhoomi, andu-indu,* p.7
52. *Kabbinahalu,* 124-25
53. *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.32
54. *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.33
55. 55a) 'Yakshagana was an established mode of the folk stage by the 17th century , and that was essentially musical in its form'- *The Karnataka Theatre,* p.19
56. Dr. Chandrashckhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Janapada rangabhoomi,* p.8
57. *Kanthirava Narasaraja Vijaya,* 21-118

58. (a) Tha.Su. Shamarao, *Kannada Nataka,* p.28
59. Muliya Thimmappayya, *Parthisubba, Appendix*-1
60. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.9

MOODALAPAYA

Introduction:

Moodalapaya, which has got the richest tradition among the Bayalatas of North Karnataka, is known by different names like *Doddaata* (Big Play), Hire Ata (Older Play), Bayalata (Open Air Play) etc. But in the districts of North Karnataka like Belgaum, Dharawada, Bijapur, Bellary, Rayachur, Gulbarga, Bidar etc. the most popular name is Moodalapaya itself. (It is popular over South Karnataka too.) Moodalapaya was the name used in North Karnataka earlier. Today though different names are used, including Moodalapaya it is more used by the old people than the youth. Perhaps the word may be forgotten in two or three generations. In recent days, after people began to develop interest in folklore, it has become a practice among the literates to call it Doddata. Not that it is wrong. But it does not have as broad a meaning as the sound that it connotes. The word '*Doddaata*' is used only in certain parts of Belgaum, Bijapur and Dharawad districts. Of course, there are reasons behind this. The *Dappinatas* (Dappu is an instrument), which are called *Sannatas* (small play) today, were born and brought up in these regions only. Especially, Belgaum district is the centre of their performing arts. Naturally it has stretched itself along the other districts in border regions. These performing arts became popular during the early decades of the 20th century, and soon they gained popularity too. Then there was the need for separating the newly added Dappinatas from Moodalapaya, which had been rooted in the region as the sole form of dramatic art. The eyes of the audience put both of them side by side with a measuring look. Because Moodalapaya appeared to be big with its theme, stage setting, costumes and makeup, and the distinct qualities of grandeur in songs and dances, it was called Doddata.'[1] And since Dappinata, with its relative simplicity, looked small compared with Doddata, it was called Sannata. The word Doddata is popular all over the Belgaum district, and in parts of Bijapur and Dharawada districts. Therefore, giving it a broader meaning and classifying it as given below[2], does not look correct:

(1) Beluvalanadu Doddata Moodalapaya (Of the East)

(2) Doddata of Gulbarga region-Thenkapaya (Of the South)

(3)Doddata of Malnad(Thipatoor)–Badagapaya (Of the North)

Restricting Moodalapaya to Beluvalanadu is still more misleading. There are some other opinions too, of the same tone. There are two types of Moodalapaya – Northern Tradition and Southern Tradition. It does not look right to stretch Doddata to the whole of North Karnataka and say that the Northern tradition itself is Doddata.'[3] It cannot be said that Moodalapaya is the Thenkathittu (Southern style) of the Doddata of North Karnataka.'[4]

Questions are asked in the districts of Bellary, Raichur and Bijapur (East) as to what these Doddatas are. In these regions, names like Bayalata, Moodalapaya, Hire Ata etc. are in vogue, though of late, the Dappinatas of Belgaum side have traversed along this side. Then they called it 'Hire Ata', in order to differentiate it from their earlier Moodalapaya Bayalata. This name is popular in and around Rayachur district. In Bellary district, Moodalapaya is called Bayalata only. Moodalapaya Bayalata might have been abridged as Bayalata. According to the people of this region, Bayalata is nothing but Moodalapaya. But they did not change Dappinata. Some people use *Dappina Kathe* (or Dappu Story). But both in the past and at present, what is found everywhere is Moodalapaya only. The words Doddata, Hire Ata and Bayalata are mere regional variations. Since Moodalapaya is present everywhere and it suggests a whole, undivided theatrical tradition, it is a more appropriate word than Doddata, which is limited to a small region. Therefore the same title has been given to this chapter.

The Meaning of Moodalapaya:

Dr. Shivarama Karanth has said that 'the western coastal area is *Paduvalapaya, and* the tradition practised in the eastern part of Ikkeri city is Moodalapaya.'[5a] However, he does not seem to have understood the meaning of Moodalapaya. Superficially, it appears natural to divide in a simple manner the Bayalata traditions of the West and the East as Moodalapaya and *Paduvalapaya,* keeping

Sahyadri as the centre. To understand the meaning and fullness of Moodalapaya, we need not go to Sahyadri or the coastal belt beyond it. Moodalapaya is a word prevalent among the folk from a long time in the past. *Paduvalapaya* is a word artificially brought into usage with a relative meaning. If you ask any person of North Karnataka about the meaning of Moodalapaya, he would answer that it is *Bayalata, Doddata* or *Hire Ata.* Dr. Karanth asked the *Bhagawatha* of Yakshagana curiously what *Paduvalapaya* was. The Yakshagana artistes of the coastal region have never heard that word. They name Yakshagana itself as *Paduvalapaya* and put it as the counter part of Moodalapaya.'[5b] But this is only an intellectual gimmickry, exercised by the scholars of folk studies. It makes it very clear that those who classify Kannada Bayalata into Moodalapaya and *Paduvalapaya* have not understood the meaning of Moodalapaya properly.

'Moodalapaya is the Bayalata tradition of the east, just like the Yakshagana below the ghats in the west. In the eastern part of Karnataka up-ghats, the most familiar convention is of Moodalapaya'. In these words of Dr. B. S. Gadginmutt also, the meaning of Moodalapaya does not become clear. None of them has turned their attention to its arrival from the east. They have haphazardly said that it is a tradition prevalent in the eastern sides of the ghats. There is a lot of difference between the sayings that it is a tradition of the east and has come from the east. If the former tells about the region where it is prevalent, the latter identifies its origin and diffusion abroad.

'Moodala' means 'of the east'. Therefore, Moodalapaya is a tradition that has come from the east. 'The very name Moodalapaya suggests that it is a tradition fostered and honoured by the artistes of the Vijayanagara era, situated in the east, of the present North Karnataka region. They used to call Thirupathi Venkateshwara hill by the name *'Moodalagiri'*.'[7] Only this statement has grasped the original meaning of Moodalapaya. They used the word Moodalapaya to a tradition that had come from the east. The practice of identifying the bullocks brought from the east as 'Moodalahori' exists in Belgaum and Dharawada districts. Similarly there is no doubt that the tradition that came from the east became Moodalapaya. 'Normally the play with a long story, which does not end up even after the light in the

east broke is Moodalapaya or *Doddata*. Therefore, it is the most appropriate interpretation of the word.'[8] These words of Simpi Linganna, that it became *Doddata* because it is a Bayalata which goes on upto daybreak, is a wrong interpretation of the word.

MOODALAPAYA – From Musical Style to Bayalata:

Just like the Yakshagana, which had been a musical style, was a poetic genre at first and then turned to be a Bayalata, Moodalapaya treaded on the same route. Moodalapaya is originally a musical style. It is just another branch of Dakshinadi music. It was more prevalent in the eastern region and has slowly moved to the west. In Hanagal, Haveri and Ranebennur, in the southern part of Dharawada district, this style is called 'Moodalapaya'. The songs of Moodalapaya Bayalata have been divided clearly as 'Yakshagana' and 'Moodalapaya'. The moment you pick up one song, its *Bhagavatha* (the background singer) immediately identifies it as either Yakshagana or Moodalapaya. The Yakshagana style resembles the coastal Yakshagana to a great extent. In the regions where Yakshagana is prevalent, in order to show the distinction, they began to use the word 'Moodalapaya'. But in regions where it has the monopoly, the need for showing the distinction did not arise. For the present, it can be easily said that in the eastern districts only pure Moodalapaya musical style is in use. But its purity gets diluted as it moves towards the west. One may observe this difference clearly in the Moodalapaya Bayalata tunes of Belgaum district. Since Uttaradi music has greatly influenced the Moodalapaya tunes, a different and distinctive style has been formed here, which looks like a blending of the two. The Moodalapaya music style, of course, stands within the frame of Carnatic classical music. Just like Yakshagana became a separate branch because of its special features, Moodalapaya also forked as a branch of Carnatic classical music. The *thalas* of Carnatic music are its assets. But only the style of presentation is different. The method of presentation of the compositions by the classical singers with *Adithal, Atathal* and *Jhampe thal* is different. The style of singing the same songs in Moodalapaya is different. Though the *ragas* and *thalas* are the same, Moodalapaya does not stick much to the classical rules. Moodalapaya

style, which has come out of the fetters of rigid classical rules and has developed its own rhythms and presentation style, is very much entertaining; therefore, it is more popular than the classical music.

The Yakshagana music style, before getting identified as Bayalata, had relied on songs and verses. When dialogues were added to the same verses, Yakshaganas became Bayalatas. This kind of growth applies more or less to Moodalapaya. The only difference is that it did not have the need to rely on the verses. Because the Moodalapaya music and dialogues were simultaneously added to the already created Yakshagana works, the Moodalapaya Bayalatas directly came into existence. Therefore, unlike some poetic works like *Sharana Leelamritha, which* were separately composed for singing in the Yakshagana style, there were none composed for singing in Moodalapaya. There are no evidences to show that poetry was recited in the Moodalapaya tune as used to be done in Yakshagana. This makes it clear that Moodalapaya came to the theatre directly and not through poetic works.

The scripts of Moodalapaya plays performed before 150-160 years are not available now.'[9] It is impossible to come to the conclusion that they had been composed even before that. These Bayalatas started at the same time as the Yakshagana works. Because the Yakshagana literature has been a popular literary genre, it had been in practice all over Karnataka. The simple works of Yakshagana had been familiar to all the literates of the 19th century, and they loved them. Therefore their composition and collection continued unobstructedly. Almost around 1840, some Yakshagana episodes had been printed in Dharawada.'[10] They came into sufficient limelight in Bangalore and Bellary. The educated people of those times had the habit of reading and collecting these works like any other literary works.'[11] The educated people of middle class added dialogues to Yakshaganas and produced Moodalapaya Bayalatas.

The system of adding dialogues to Yakshaganas was started in the early part of the 19th century. A pack of 18 Yakshagana scripts of this class was found recently in the Muragoda village of Belgaum district.'[12] Among them four were written by a poet called

'Duradundeesha' (The information regarding the rest of the writers is not yet available). The real name of the poet is Shiva Basava. 'Duradundeesha' is his pen name. His place of birth is Bailahongala and the period is about 1800 A.D. His works are (i) *Prabhudevara Yakshagana*, (ii) *Krishnaharana Yakshagana,* (iii) *Seethaswayamvara Yakshagana* and (iv) *Cholongana Yakshagana*. The scripts of these have been copied after 1858. So it is clear that they have been written in the early part of the 19th century. The poet has said in his *'Prabhudevara Yakshagana'* that 'the faultless poet Duradundeesha has written this virtuous story called Yakshagana, fully knowing about its greatness and fully aware of the fact that he is writing Yakshagana.' A copy of *Krishnaharana* Yakshagana has been reserved for *swara* signals. Instructions for *raga* and *thala* also have been given. The blend of folk flavour in dialogues is brightly seen, the moment we look at it. It is important that these Yakshaganas blended with dialogues, which are not found in the Yakshagana Bayalatas of the coastal region, are present in the Moodalapaya Bayalatas.'[13] There is no doubt that these have acted as the foundation for Moodalapaya Bayalata. This view is strengthened by the themes of most of the Moodalapaya Bayalatas, having the same names of Yakshaganas. The Moodalapaya Bayalatas were produced by incorporating Moodalapaya music of the east to these *champ*-styled Yakshaganas. At present, the oldest manuscript available of Moodalapaya is '*Kumara Rama'*. This is a duplication of the copy printed in 1856 by Surja Singh in Dharawada. (This has been brought to the author's notice by Sri S. B. Nayak, Asst. Director, Prasaranga, Karnataka University, Dharawada. This copy is available in his collection). The Moodalapaya Bayalatas, printed at Bellary, in about 1900, are available now. Therefore, we may easily come to the conclusion that, before 1900, in the later half of the 19th century, these shows might have entered the theatre. At the same time, it could also be noted that a Bayalata troupe of North Kannada District had given performances in the districts of North Karnataka.'[14] These shows might have inspired to Moodalapaya. But this is a very feeble guess.

When this is the background of Moodalapaya, it is in vain that we take its origin to unknown places. There are people who place it in parallel with Greek plays, though it does not have a history of more than one and a half centuries. It is far from truth if one says 'Moodalapaya scenes, the purpose of its background and foreground, its story based on heroism etc. take it very near to the Greek plays.'[15] What kind of relationship can exist between the Greek plays having the distinctive qualities - like the use of masks, tragic elements, three unities, background consisting of a large number of people and the characters not going beyond three in number and our Moodalapaya? This has already been discussed in detail in the second chapter 'Moodalapaya must be the most ancient one among all the theatrical performances. The scholars have logically come to the conclusion with evidences that the source of Sanskrit plays also is found here itself.'[16] M. T. Dhoopa says so, but he has forgotten to name those scholars. At the time of the birth of the Sanskrit plays (B.C.), Kannada language had not even risen to the level of literature. If so, how did Moodalapaya give rise to Sanskrit plays? A number of elements of Sanskrit drama are clearly mixed in Moodalapaya. Just by that, how is it possible to say that it became the mother of Sanskrit drama? It is said that both Yakshagana and Moodalapaya have come from Prakrith origin. They seem to be the two forms of the same Prakrith plays, and branches of the same theatre, evolving differently in different environment.'[17] Just like the views expressed above, this also is a guesswork. What is the use of these misguided words of false pride that take satisfaction in toiling to search for the origin of our dramas and Bayalatas in some ancient tradition and relate it to the present practice? Moodalapaya is a written Bayalata. Definitely it did not come down to the script form after being passed on from mouth to mouthun like the other early folk forms. When the written documents do not back to date more than 150 years, it is wrong to remember or connect it to the traditional Sanskrit, Greek or Prakrith dramas.

WORKS (Scripts):

The Moodalapaya Bayalata entered the theatre largely during the later half of the 19th century. By that time education had reached

the doorstep of the common man, crossing the limited circle. Schools had been opened in villages. In those schools, a student who passed his matriculation gathered a good knowledge of language, literature and grammar. No one could hold those who studied further in Teachers' Training College, for two or three more years. They studied Sanskrit in a systematic way. Most of the Moodalapaya poets are teachers. Those who were not teachers studied Sanskrit privately, at home after their matriculation. Knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature, the accomplishment of the composition of *Shatpadi, Sangathya* and *Chaupadi* (stanzas of four lines) gained naturally through practice, in close contact with rural life, and the scarcity of folk dramas were the factors that drove the educated of those days to compose the Moodalapayas. These educated middle class people took Sanskrit dramas as their models. The moment they added dialogues – the Yakshagana literary works were ready for performance. When the Sanskrit drama was distilled through Yakshagana, Moodalapaya took its birth with a folk flavour. A close look at Moodalapaya enables one to see these three elements blended in it.

PRAYER:

It is a convention with us to start writing a poetic work with a prayer to one's favourite God. As far as Moodalapaya is concerned, there is a small difference. Here, the prayer is not offered to one's personal God; but to a General God, in whom all people have great faith. Though the first few poets prayed to their own favourite Gods like Vishnu, Shiva, Hanumantha, Rama, Venkatesha, Viroopaksha etc. the convention took a diversion later. As far as prayer was concerned, a substantiated form was brought into use. Lord Ganapathi became the supreme God and He being the favourite of all, prayer to Him became inevitable. Though the poet referred to the rest of the Gods, no one turned their attention to them. The other Gods lost their lustre in front of Lord Ganapathi. This is one of the important distinctive qualities of folk theatre. The earlier poets had given third, fourth or fifth place to Ganapathi after praying to their own favourite Gods. There are no Sanskrit dramas that start with prayer to Ganapathi. If

so, how did Ganapathi become so important? Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu are Gods of primary importance. If you hear the words of the theologists that Ganapathi is the God of the common folk, you will understand the reason for Ganapathi getting the first place in the Bayalata of the common folk.

When prayer to Ganapathi became imperative, the poets (without considering their caste, religion or theme) added prayer songs to Ganapathi at the beginning of their works. Depending on the poets and their compositions, naturally these songs varied from each other. But the convention did not stop at this. It chose one or two songs among the many songs of these poets and confirmed them. These chosen songs became popular too. Whatever be the poets' writings, people did not care for them, and they began to sing, in the beginning, only those songs chosen by convention. While copying the works, they wrote those songs in the place of the original poets' songs. That is why in all the available manuscripts of Moodalapaya, the number of Ganapathi prayer songs does not go beyond two or three. Thus whoever be the writer, it becomes clear that the prayer song is not his.

Among the Ganapthi prayer songs, the most prevalent and popular all over North Karnataka is:

> Sreegowri varaputra sathatha shubha charithra
> Yogi sajjana sthotra janani bagatra……
> kodu enage mathiya

For this song, sufficient text variations are there. The name of Kudutini Bheemesha at the end suggests that the song is written by a poet of the same place. It must have got diffused all over at a later stage.'[18] The prayer song mostly prevalent in the eastern districts is as follows:

> Sri vignaraja pahimam . . . . .
> Salaho nee mudadi

The name at the end of the verse suggests that it has been composed by a poet of Kampali. Several other prayer songs have been composed on various other Gods. (An elaborate discussion of

them will be done while telling about the Moodalapaya Stage performance.)

***Suthradhara and Nati* (The Stage Manager and the actress concept):**

After the prayer song, the Gods to whom the prayer is sent appear on the stage. After that, the Suthradhara's pleading, his blessings and the entry of the *Saarathi* (Driver) follow. All these are the theatrical conventions. They are the occasions for readily set dialogues. The poet has nothing to do with them. It has already been told that the Moodalapaya poets had kept the Sanskrit drama as a model. For the manifestation of this opinion, some instances of the conversations between the Suthradhara and the Nati after the prayer song, in some Bayalatas could be seen :

(At first only Suthradhara is found on the stage. Then he calls his wife or Nati from inside.)

Su: (Song) Come to me O the lotus eyed
Moon faced and lotus eyed O come to me
I am suffering from the heat of Cupid
Come to me fast O lotus faced
Your master has come here alone.

O make me happy
O my love, if your make-up is over, come and
Decorate this hall packed with audience.

Nati: Arya, I am here at your service on your order.

Su: My love, I feel happy to see the gathering here. I called you to enquire why they have come here.
What may be the reason?

Nati: Darling, did you forget that they have come with the intention of watching and enjoying the story of the supreme King Sathyavarma who is gloriously shining on this Earth as the most truthful man?

Su: My love, you have done a good thing by reminding me of it. Now you start this episode with a song on any season.

Nati: Darling, which season shall I sing about?

Su: Which has arrived just now.

(The Nati Sings)

Su: Arye, the audiences have started floating in joy
on hearing your song. Alright. Next it will be the
court of Shambhu, holding the Thrishula.
Therefore let us get the characters ready.
Come.'[19]

This scene with the same songs and dialogues could be seen in several other manuscripts. Songs are different. Therefore this is definitely not a part of it. They are completely the imitation of Sanskrit drama. It seems it did not fit in with our convention. This scene remained in the manuscript without getting an opportunity for presenting on the stage. When a literary work is brought to the stage, it is natural to undergo sufficient changes. Many things are lost and many others are added. The Suthradhara-Nati episode is the prominent element that was lost from the Moodalapaya original work. (The details of the newly added elements are given in the 'Theatrical Performance'.)

Bhamini (The verses in Bhamini Shatpadi):

After the prayer song (in some manuscripts after the dialogue between Suthradhara and Nati), the singing of verses in Bhamini Shatpadi is known as *'Bhamini'*. This reminds us of the introductory songs of Sanskrit dramas that hint at the further story element. The Sandhi (link) of Shatpadi poetry, which is found in the introductory song with a suggestive meaning, explains the story outline. The number of verses will be like 5-6-7. Very rarely it goes up to 8-10. Sometimes it comes down to three also. In some manuscripts, considering half verses as full, serial numbers have been put. Intimating the audience with the story to be shown further, in brief, is the purpose of Bhamini. Because in the process of the drama, the poet does not have the freedom either to tell or hear anything, he expresses his personal opinions here itself.

Mudadı elemale guruvu chennanu/ Hridayakamaladı nudısıdandadı/ Vidhavidhada ee krıthiya pelvenu aatha peldanthe/ Ell devathegalıge vandısı/ Balla kavıgaligeragi begane/ Sallisuve ee katheya pelvenu rasikaradavaru.'[20]

(I shall happıly tell you the story of this episode as my Guru Chenna of Elemale has played in my lotus heart. I shall offer this story to you *Rasıkas* (those who take maxımum pleasure) after bowing my head to all the Gods and paying my due respect to all the knowledgeable poets.)

The above song reveals the intense wish of the Moodalapaya poets to carefully follow the path trodden by the classical poetic tradition. The prayer to one's favourite God, rememberıng the classical poets (though the names are not mentioned), the poet's humılity - all these show the mental background of the poets. Some poets have mentioned the names of their regions also in their *Bhamini.*

Hirıya Bagevadı graamadi/Iruva veerabhadranıdanu/Sarala bhasheyinda rachısıda lankadahanavanu/Tharunarellaru ıdanu aadı/Nereda janarıge thoralendu/ Harushad.ndali Harana smarisutha Ramacharıteyanu'[21]

(Veerabhadra of Hire Bagevadi Village composed this *Lankadahana* ın a simple language. The youths are happıly presenting this story of Rama to the audience gathered here remembering Lord Hara).

The Suthradhara sings the *Bhamini.* Of late, this has been put aside. Unlike the *Suthradhara-Nati* dialogue, though this is not completely removed from the play, it is not included as it used to be earlier. Seldom, one or two songs are sung, only for namesake. Some have completely stopped it. In such manuscripts, *Bhamini* is rare to be seen. The manuscript writers do not even have the patıence to wrıte it down, and it has slipped off from the theatrical convention.

Dialogues:

Moodalapaya is a work with a particular purpose. Unlike Yakshagana, the original poetry of Moodalapaya did not come to theatre through extempore' speech. The speeches here are not limited to mere explication of its texts. They have an independent existence. In other folk dance dramas (*Sangya Balya, Radhanata, Dasarata*)

the dialogues are developed depending on the songs. The songs of Moodalapaya and its dialogues do not depend on each other for their development. Both of them together produce the action of the drama. The reason for this sort of composition may be keeping Sanskrit dramas as their model. Though the number of songs is more, the dialogues are not severed in the middle. As one has to put in a lot of effort to make by heart the dialogues mixed with old Kannada and Sanskrit with rhyme and alliteration, the form of Moodalapaya dialogues, in particular, is firm and kept unaltered. In these dialogues, that are woven in the face of the context, the separation of verse speech and free speech is in practice only in some regions. The speech that comes after a verse is called verse-speech and the independent dialogue part is called free speech. In the dialogues of Moodalapaya, the speech that suddenly wakes up the audience by its thundering sound, consisting of its incomparable splendidness and harshness, are the words in the beginning, introducing the characters of the drama. In order to introduce oneself, a character has to get across three stages - *Peethike, Namankitha and Sabha* This systematic combination gives elegance and splendour to Moodalapaya, where heroism and fury are the prominent elements.

In the court scene, the characters are sitting on thrones (chairs). The *Sarathi* speaks to each one of them. If the *Sarathi* asks directly addressing them, 'who are you?', the character does not tell its name in the beginning. Instead, it paves the path for further description of its nature and conduct. Then the character queries back to the Sarathi as to who he is. This is called Peethika(introductory) speech. When the Sarathi questions Lakshmi, she asks him back like this:

Lakshmi: Ahe, appa, Sevaka Kalahamsagamini poornendu Mukhi chaaru mangalagathre ghanapayodhare sarasa/Kavinuthe prodhe mallikamandasmithe sadvartheyutheyada/ nammannu vivarisuva neenu daaru?ninna hesarenu? Peasrisuvanthavanagu kandya bhrithyothamane.'[22]

(Asking about my details, who paces like a swan, whose face is like full moon, who is well built and auspicious, having heavy buttocks, worshipped by poets, mature-minded, smiling like jasmine, first tell me who you are. What is your name? Tell me O the best servant, tell your name.)

If we closely observe this Peethika speech, we may be briefly introduced to the Gods, virtuous people, sages, women and monsters. When the Sarathi queries Shumbha:

Shumbha: ' .. Ee shreshtana sammukhadi ninthu vichara maaduva naraagrani neenu daaru, ninna hesarenu, thada maadade nudidu jeevisu. Illadiddare eko, ee khadgadinda kadidu beesaaduvenu kandeya naraadhamaa?

(Standing before this Supreme Being, making an enquiry, you the best human being, tell me who you are. Tell me your name this very minute and live. Otherwise, I shall crush you into pieces with this sword and throw you away, did you understand, the worst human being?) '[23]

Thus he answers in the most discourteous way. In accordance with his monstrous qualities, his rudeness and cruelty are seen prominently.

After answering the Peethika speech, the Sarathi introduces himself and once again asks their names and whereabouts. The second time when the character answers, it mentions its name in a colourful way and this is called 'Namankitha Speech'. In the composition of this speech, the poets exploit all their scholarship and rhyme-skill. One of the Namankitha speeches of Krishna is as follows:

Krishna: Dwipad vijrimbhana sthambha gumbha gumbhaaya maanadambhorana nihkumbhini sadaa chumbitha sthaavara jeevajaalamam mad hridayadol imbaagi nillisigambheerambu jaasanadambholi dihkumbhinee sutharemba bhaktha kadambaadigalige mathpaada viraajithadol oppuva sugandha swaadavitthu chanchalodbhashadim mereyuva sanchithaartha-daishwarya tharamoorthi keerthi shankha chakra gadaa paani sankarshana naamaankitha vaikunthapura nivaasa vaasudeva paraathpara shree krishnamoorthyendu thiliyelai Sarathi.

(O *Sarathi,* know me as the one who holds the entire
network of stable lives in his heart as a support,
giving place for his devotees at his feet, holding
conch, wheel and mace in his hands, having the name
Sankarshana, living in Vaikuntha, I am Shree Krishna
moorthi)'[24]

There are a number of different varieties of *Namankitha* speeches. Sometimes it goes on for pages. Why won't it be pages if

the characters go on talking about the names of the 56 countries that they rule, the glorious tradition of their descent, the elaborate description of their capital, etc.? After it is over, the *Sarathi* asks the character; 'Myself and the audience have learnt your name. But may I know the reason for your coming here?' The answer that the character gives to this question is called the '*Sabha Speech*', because it explains the reason for coming to the stage. In this speech, the introduction to the story-line is in the seed-form. The sabha - speech of Indra is as follows:

Indra · elaa saarathı, ee sabha madhyakke banda kaaranavenendare, dındı thammata bherı chanda dhanka nagaarı dhan dhanal dhanarennuva khandıtha shabda nadugisıthu-ee brahmaanda. Hındu shathrugala edeya gundıgeya khandavannu bageyuva ee uddandamaada sabhaamandalakke banda bageyenendare pundareekodbhavanaada Brhmadevanam kandu chand prachanda vaırıyam padakondu enna bhujabalada thındıyannu kaledukondu baralapekshısıddene. Thasmaath kaaranadında bandıruvenu saarathee chaathuryakara mathı

(Meaning : Hey *Sarathı*, the reason for my coming to the mid-stage ıs - the various types of drum - sounds shook the entire cosmos. The way I came to this *sabha-mandala,* that has the power to break open the hearts of the enemy flocks, is after meeting the Pundareekodbhava Brahmadeva. I have come because of this reason O clever Sarathi')[25]

These three types of speeches fully introduce the distinctive qualities of Moodalapaya. Since the writers have an indepth knowledge of old Kannada and Sanskrit, it is very much natural that their pedantry is reflected in their speeches. In some places, the form of old Kannada is very strange, when the character finds it difficult to manage with his entire speech, he simply makes it pompous by his abundant use of old Kannada *prathyayas* (lınkers and prepositions). Therefore sometimes both old Kannada and modern Kannada are combined in the same speech.

Ghorasura. Hey Maharaja, the Kımpurusha of Naimisharanya, I have brought the best Kshathrıyas from Bhasthi etc. and have pushed them ınto prıson.'[26]

As the Moodalapaya poets focused their attention on the pomp of words, very few of them wrote in a poetic manner. The capacıty

to compose Moodalapaya comes to a poet if he has got word-pomp, more than poetic talent. Though these works lack the poetic elements in them, the drawback is hidden behind the splendour of words, the grandeur of songs and musical instruments. Still, there are examples of gifted poets, though they are rare. When Prabhavathi tells Sudhanva 'Save my eyes, which are always looking at your delicate body, which is as handsome as a sugarcane bow,'[27] her words are poetic.

To whatever heights the Moodalapaya poets soared, they could not completely cut themselves off from the folk environment where they lived. They seem to be well aware of the fact that they are writing for the rustic audience. The simple similes used in the speeches, the comparison made to events of day-to-day life are clear proofs of this consciousness in them. The words of Prabhavathi to Sudhanva, who is setting out to war: 'If seeds are not sown, how would crops come up on the earth? If you sow the seeds with love on this earth, which is the embodiment of the insolent youth, whose master you yourself are, we shall have children by the grace of the Three-eyed and it will lead to our salvation.'[28] The comparison that she makes is something that reaches the rustics immediately. However, sometimes, these comparisons go down to extremely low level, and they harm the seriousness of the situation altogether.

Hanjadhwaja 'When the Shathapathra Nethra Mukunda is there with us as our friend, how do the Pandavas get the gothrahathya? If the donkey is carrying pearls and diamonds, would it realize their value? Though Muradhwamsi, Mrithyunjaya's friend, is with them, these Pandavas seem to have come following this ass (Yajna horse) for collecting money.''[29]

These words appear as though some rustic is abusing someone. Except for servants, *Sarathis* and *Sakhis* (maids), all the other characters speak in a very formal language. The characters who belong to lower class only speak in the colloquial language. (We may remember the lower class characters in Sanskrit dramas speaking in Prakritha language). As they speak letting their tongues loose, sometimes these characters reveal some aspects of contemporary common man's life. Two speeches of Prabhavathi's *sakhi* are as follows:

1) Nanna ganda dandige hogathaanantha pundeekaalu kutti hindi Aradu katti undu horaduvudarolage hoththaayithu.

(I was late because I kept pounding the grains, grinding and preparing for meals as my husband was going to join the army.)'[30]

2) Nanna gandanigoo channa thodisikondu hogyaaravva gunda ginda thaagi uleethaano illo

(Avva, they have taken my husband also in trousers. Who knows whether he would come back or not, whether he would be shot dead.')[31]

The writers of Moodalapaya are more concerned about speeches than songs. They chose the theatre for the exhibition of the vigorous play of their scholarship. They maintain their distinction even in making a show of their word-pomp. That distinctive quality is their craze for rhyme. They struggle to protect and retain rhyme and alliteration. People also consider the work with the wreath of speeches, woven with rhymes and alliterations, as the best piece and that must have encouraged such, compositions. They fill their works with rhymes, which they have valued more than their lives. It is said that a poet called Manvi Gundacharya committed an error in the use of a rhyming word in his '*Madhyaramayana*.' He greatly repented for it when he realized his mistake. Crime should be followed by punishment, shouldn't it? So, it is said that his fingers subsequently shriveled.'[32] Whatever may be the credibility or non-credibility of this story, this is a good example for the people's faith in rhyme. As far as speeches are concerned, rhyme could be identified in two ways. One is the alliteration stretched over the entire speech; second one is the addressing in rhyme coming at the end of a speech. The first type is found in speeches in a variety of ways as follows:

1) 'Da'- Ee mandalakke gandanendukondisikolluva bhandane, nanagobbalige gandanaagendu andaledare kenda kaaruththa ganda saththa randimundiyaranthe nannannu kandu thundaagi nilluviyallo bhanda, ee mooroo mandalada hinduraajarallı pundnennisikollalikke neenu gandase'[33] (Prameela to Arjuna)

2) 'Dha'- Sadharavaagi edhuru ninthu madhuravvada maathininda chadhuraa enna sadhanakke baarendhu paadhakkeragi odharikombuva chadhureyannu najaru maadadhe bedhari ninthu gadhagadhane eke naduguththee'[34]

3) 'JA'-Hey Raaja, ninna sariraajlaada naanuninna vaajiyannu biduvudakke raajiyaagi bhojanakke baarendu mejavaanige karedare baajaarabadakiyendu bejaaru maaduvudu vaajamiyeno' 35 9 Prameela to Arjuna)

4) 'Ra'-Pura parivaaradavaru pariparıya siriyinda sthiravaagi daaridryavannu neegi gurubhakthiyol shaktharaagi harasmaraneya parinaamadinda kaalaharana maaduvaro illavo.36 (Hamsadhwaja to the Minister)

5) 'pa'- Chappanna deshagalalli nammodane oppanda maadikondiruva maandalika bhooparu namma appaneya merege oppithavaada kappa kaanikegalannu jappane oppisuvudakke thayaariruvaro hege.37 (Hamsadhwaja to the Minister)

6) 'La'- Hey, sallalitha pallavaadareninage kalyaanavaagali. Vallabhe illi baa. Ullaasadinda maneyalli nalleyara koode kaala kaleyuvudannu bittu illigeke bande 38(Sudhanva to Prabhavathi)

The second type of a rhyme comes at the end of the speech. According to the characters that are addressed in the speech, the addressing is done in a rhyming manner. When the character pulls up in a raised tone, swinging his voice, a strange beauty is created. Though they are written by the poets themselves, subsequently they are converted into readymade speeches, and therefore there is no limit to them.

These rhyme units could be divided as follows:

1) **For male character:**
Kantha- Gunavantha Kantha- Raja shreemantha
Kantha- Mathivantha Raja- sakala bhoja
Raja- Ravikotitheja Sundara- Manohara
Chakravarthi- Sadgunamoorthy Punda-Moorlokada ganda
Arasa-Mathinol sarasa Manthri- Sarvakala swathanthri
Dushta- Kulabhrashta Ramana- Bhagya sampanna
Ramana- Sanmohanaabharana

2) **For female characters:**
Kanthamani-Sunadarasuguni Ramani- Sadgunaabharani
Kamini-kalahamsa gamini Baba sakhi-chandra sumikhi
Kanthe-bidu ninna chinthe Ramani bidu ninna yochane
Pankajadala nayane- Maththeni yochane Nari-vaiyari
Kanthe-Shreemanthe Tharale- eralegangale
Sakhiye-chandramukhiye Mathe-lokavikhyathe

3) **For Saarathi:**

Bala- sadgunasheela Sutha- prakhyatha
Kinkara- sukhankara Sandanagrani-dheemani
Kanda- manakkananda Dootha- prakhyatha
Tharala- manikyadharala Magane- chennigane
Bala-susheela   Saarathi- athi jagrathee
Bala bhavyaguna sheela   Saarathi- chathuryakara mathee
Kinkara- anuchara saarathi- bidu bhaya poorthi
Saarathi- sathishaya preethi saarathi- nemaka moorthi
Sevakagrani- bhaktha chinthamani Saarathi- holasa naarathi

4) **Saarathi – to** others (for joke)

Doreye- hattikatagi horiye   Bhoopa- kripa
Arasa- horasa
Thayi- Hannamenasinakayi Thayi- Hasi pyaralakayi

All these are rhyming couplets. Some single rhymes also exist - *Uththunga kuchada mattebhagamini, Mathsyakangale, Sarpaveni, Padmanethri, Pranavallabhe, Chapalakshi, Udurajavadane, Rajeevanethre etc.*

Verses:

There is nothing special about the composition of Moodalapaya verses. Since the talent and scholarship of the poets are drained in framing the speeches, the verses have remained poor. It is really puzzling why they neglect the songs, when they give so much importance to the speeches. Most of the songs have got a feeble structure. In most of them, the prose dialogues have been cut, and they are attached in the form of songs:

Enna magane laliso ennaya maatha
Ennaya matha ennaya matha
Chennagi paliso
Dashratha bhoopanu eeshanol beredano
Koodi indige naalku divasagaladavo.

(My son, listen to me, listen to my words
Listen to my word, O my son,
King Dasharatha has become one with God
Four days rolled by after that'[39])

These words of Kaikeyi to Bharatha make us doubt whether it is poetry or prose. There is the possibility of it being composed as poetry to be sung in the readily set tunes. It is difficult to identify the words of poetry in the noisy atmosphere created by the singing of songs and the sound of the musical instruments at the background.

In most of the Moodalapaya songs, we may see only two lines. But in reality only those two lines do not make one complete song. It is only a stanza of the song. One song consists of about three stanzas. As soon as the singing of the first stanza is over, the speech related to it is delivered and then the next stanza is taken for singing. The prolonged dialogues between the stanzas make the stanzas look like independent songs. Moodalapaya looks more splendid because of this combination of songs and speech.

***Chandassu* (Prosody):**

Except for *shatpadi*, no other of prosody is seen in Moodalapaya. Very rarely, in old manuscripts, the use of *Vritha(circle)* is seen. Here and there some *Kanda-Seesa* verses are seen. These poets are fond of *Bhamini Shatpadi*. We have already seen the introduction to the episode in the beginning of *Bhamini Shatpadi*. They use the same for further verses too. Only half of it is used as an independent piece. The prosodies commonly seen are as follows: (These songs of feeble structure will not fit into the strict codes of prosody.)

(1) Amsha Gananvitha' appaneyani Appane kelenage kottu. (Listen o father give me permission) '[40]

Sangathya: Oppisu veelyava janaka
Thappade ripugala chapparisuthathan
Doppisuvenu hayava Janaka.

(O father, entrust me the responsibility of the war. I shall defeat the enemies and bring the horse back to you, O father)

You may see the features of *sangathya* here. Verses with small differences like this are seen in one or two places. The scholars have to decide whether they should be called variation of *sangathya* or defective texts. A form of *dwipadi* (couplet) written just by adding the first two lines of *sangathya* is as follows:

Kogile swara keli googeyu naliyuvude
Nagasampageyannu bhramaravu ballude
(Will the owl dance on hearing the cucukoo's voice
Will the bee know nagasampige flower[41])

(2) ***Mathra ganaanvitha:***
Tharuni maniyale nenu
(You the supreme young woman)

Kusuma Shatpadi: Durulathanadali bandu/ durulathanadali / tharale neenu bare[42]

(coming in a wicked manner, coming in a wicked manner, come o you young woman)

Sharashatpadi: Thadamadade bidadellava peluve/ podaveepale kele/ vara ratha thuragavu sariyaagiruvavu/ dhara deerale kele[43]

(I shall tell you everything without any delay
Listen to me O the mistress of the earth
The best chariot and the horse are in good condition
Listen to me O brave woman).

Another form, where four each *ganas* with four *matras* are used, is as follows:

Kamini maniye premade lalisu/ Samaja gamini nari shiromani (O the best young woman, listen to me with love, O the one who walks elegantly like elephant, the best young woman.)

You may see a composition that suits the occasion of excitement.

Bandhuvalida alaligagi nondukolla bedo/Nimma thandi vamsha kotta neenu kandanulideeyo.(Do not feel sad for the loss of your relative. You are the only remaining son, born of your father[45])

A composition where a *gana* of four *mathras* has been added to three *ganas* of five mathras:

Naagamudiyale neenu gogarisabyadale/ Moogu mundaleyannu koyyuveneene. (You woman with a snake-like plait, do not complain, I shall cut your nose and forehead, do you know?[46])

Vardhika Shatpadi:

Inthunaranaliye balikaththa kuntheedevi/ Duhswapna beelalantharangadi chinthisutha/ Shreekrishnanalligekanthadali bandu/ Enenutha irdalendade (As the man died, Kunthidevi cried. When she had a nightmare, worrying in mind about it, she came to Shree Krishna alone, and you know what she told him[47])

Subsequently the tune of Moodalapaya songs became a set tradition. Therefore the later poets, without bothering about prosody, composed their songs, following those set tunes. As the tune and rhythm of songs gained more importance, the rigidity of prosody became relaxed. Now, only the initial rhyme has been retained. It is not easy to clearly identify the prosody used in the ancient manuscripts. It is very natural if they have undergone changes and variation while being passed on from hand to hand. Very rarely some original manuscripts of the poets are seen. If we collect those manuscripts and undertake a study of prosody in all of them, definitely we would get some new varieties of prosody there.

Character-Rasa etc.:

Whatever may be the complexity of the theme, it becomes a simple narrative in Moodalapaya. The poet does not have the serious intention of going deep down to its theme, or closely observing and dealing with sensitive aspects of the characters. The viewer also does not wish to see it It is not right to expect that it should be like that. The characters have been classified as evil and good on a simple line. The poet need not toil to introduce their traits as a whole. Since the nature and features of the respective characters are deep rooted in the mind of the audience, the moment they enter the stage they measure their entire being-length, breadth and depth wise. This kind of complete involvement of the sentimental folk audience in the drama is not possible for the sophisticated audience. Therefore the poet does not have much responsibility about the development of the characters. The logic and argument of the dialogues are also very much simple and straightforward. Sometimes this simplicity goes to such a large extent that the characters forget their seriousness, and begin to converse and quarrel, just like the ordinary folk. The poet

who lives amidst the folk only puts on the guise of legendary characters to the men around him. When Rama and Ravana are involved in a conversation, they are not the characters of Ramayana. Ravana is the villainous rustic who has kidnapped another's wife. Rama is that wife's desperate husband. The speeches between the two will develop attacking each other. The civilized audience will be unable to involve themselves in it and they feel that they are washing their dirty linen in the public. But it looks quite natural for the rustic audience. On the whole it has to be admitted that the character creation in Moodalapaya is of low quality. And this is the reality.

Rasas of valour and violence are the life blood of Moodalapaya. Its stage arrangement, dialogues, dances and entry of characters - all these are built up for feeding these *rasas*. The titles of most of these works consist of '*Yuddha*' (war) or '*Kaalaga*' (Battle). *Ramanjaneya Yuddha*; '*Babhruvahana Kaalaga*' are examples. Therefore it is not wrong if we say that the Moodalapaya has been born for the depiction of heroic rasa. The grandeur of its show and its thundering sounds establish this. Just like the development of characters is of low quality, the feeding of its *rasas* lie in the word-pompous speeches falling from the mouths of the characters and the frenzied dances on the attic-planks. It has to grow, being produced and trained with the background music. The number of '*Kalyana*' (wedding) episodes also is not a small one. (Girija Kalyana, Kanakangi Kalyana, etc). But these are marriage episodes only for namesake. Their entire body is filled up with battles. Though there are scopes for repleting it with *Shringara Rasa* (Erotic flavour), they are marginalised or ignored. There is no scope for love or love-dialogues. Only when it is inevitable they slip through the artificial speech. There are stories of extreme devotion (*Hanumantha Lingadharana* etc.). The story of Harishchandra that reveals the greatness of truth also is there. However, none of these fit in with the Moodalapaya tradition. There is a big difference between Moodalapaya and the themes, characters and *rasas* of these stories. If Harishchandra delivers his speech, dancing and speaking in an artificial manner, it looks odd. The stories of delicate feelings and *rasas* in Moodalapaya look as queer as a poor recluse wearing a crown on his head.

Poets:

The Moodalapaya poets are not of first grade. Though they have written their works for the rustic audience, they are not folk poets. They are middle class poets – a combination of the folk and the sophisticate habits, their level has gone a bit higher than the folk. But they are standing in the middle because they do not have the talent or capacity to write in the sophisticated style. It would be better to call the Moodalapaya poets scholarly rather than gifted. They have earned the respect and honour by stunning the rustic through their mesmerising compositions, based on their knowledge and scholarship. They have mentioned their names in their writings as it is usually done in sophisticated poetry.

1. In Kampalipura, Kalgi Nagappa's good son has composed this using hard and soft words[48]. (Kanakangi Kalyana)

2. People talk about Venupuri of Bidure happily. Residing there, a good-hearted man called Subbarya [49] (Karibamata's Story)

   Some poets have revealed only the names of their favourite God and the name of their place.

3. I shall always worship Bhimesha [50] (Samba Lakshini Kalyana)

4. Bandhu Shathapureesha Shankarendra[51] (Devi Katha)

5. Remembering Kind Amaresha

   O Ganaraja I worship you[52] (Sugandhapushpa harana)

Words like *bandhushathapuri*(hundreds of relatives) reveal the poet's craze for Sanskrit. We get a number of examples like this. We get the names of the poet and his place from these lines only. However, these names go on changing from place to place because these poets live a nomadic life. The people of the respective regions have adopted the names of their own region and God to their verses. Therefore when we decide the name of the poet's place on the basis of these lines, we should be careful.

The Moodalapaya works are available, printed about 1900. The poets must have lived before that, at the most 3-4 decades ago. Further back, we cannot go. At present some poets are still alive. If we keep

this as the border line, we may understand that a number of Moodalapaya poets have lived and written somewhere between 1900 and 1950. The first half of this half century could be taken as the Golden Age of Moodalapaya. Very recent works are the artificial imitation of the earlier works. It is not that impossible to collect the history of these innumerable poets, who had lived only a generation ago.

Music:

Already in the beginning of this chapter, Moodalapaya musical style has been described. This style, which is only another variation of Carnatic music originally, has got its own distinct qualities. It is clear that it has evolved within the frame of the *raga* and *thala* of *Dakshinadi* music. But in the manuscripts of Bayalatas, *ragas and thalas* have not been mentioned. Even if there are, rarely are they found in very old works. The *ragas* and *thalas a*re found to be suggested in some works, which belong to the first one or two decades of this century. That means there was a time when Moodalapaya music had been identified with Yakshagana music and its songs were set to *ragas* and *t*halas. Subsequently, these *ragas* and *thalas* became ready tunes, set in a particular style. In the confusion created by these tunes, the *ragas* and *thalas* disappeared. For each and every song of Moodalapaya, there are particular *ragas* and *thalas* of Dakshinadi music. However, the *Suthradhara* who sings it does not have a clear idea of them. Because, they learn the conventional tunes from their teachers. They never try to learn about *ragas* and *thalas*. A custom that is there in the eastern districts signifies their faith in convention. Here, if the song of a script is sung in a particular tune, the same tune is followed in a far away place also, where that script is popular and known to all. Perhaps the Moodalapaya poets must have been musicians too. They must have been setting tunes to their songs, and getting one or two of the disciples ready, by training them how to sing. After that they used to get publicity, passing from mouth to mouth. Had they not known music, how would they suggest ragas and *thalas* in their initial works! However, after these ready tunes were set, for the recent poets the need for the knowledge of music did not arise. They set out straight on the old tunes passing on from

place to place. Sometimes these changes went to the extent of spoiling their original form too.

The number of *Dakshinadi ragas* commonly used in Moodalapaya songs does not go more than ten or fifteen. The touch of ragas like *Mohana, Regupthi, Kalingada, Kethara, Gauli, Kalyani, Ketharathodi, Bhimapalas, Bhairavi* etc. could be clearly identified. But it is impossible to obtain any information about them from the singing *Suthradharas*. The *thalas* used are *Adi, Roopaka, Ata Thriputa, Jhampe and Bilandi*. There are some other *layas (speed)*, but they depend on the same *thalas*. When you consider them from this perspective, the singing style of Doddata songs is endowed with a regionally distinct quality.'[53]. 'The style of these Moodalapaya songs is neither Carnatic nor Uttaradi'[54] appear to be a wrong opinion. The Moodalapaya song which we hear today may not sound like *either Dakshinadi* or *Uttaradi* classical music. Just because of this, if they are denied of *Dakshinadi* or *Uttaradi* origin, it is not right. It has already been clearly established that the style of Moodalapaya music has its origin in Dakshnadi. It is true that the regional qualities have been added to them. The Moodalapaya musical style was formed by the combination of *Dakshinadi* with the regional distinctions of the east.

It is a significant historical event that the Moodalapaya music that is drifting away from *Dakshinadi* is being fascinated by the *Uttaradi* style. During the period between 1910 and 1960, *Uttaradi* has wielded its influence on this region. The common folks have developed a craze for *Uttaradi* more than they have done with *Dakshinadi* music. In Belgaum, Dharawada (west) and Bijapur (west) districts, *Uttaradi* has achieved a harmonious blending with Moodalapaya Bayalata. The blending is so thick and fast that they cannot be separated by a line. The new style that is the outcome of this blending is miles apart from the original Moodalapaya style. In eastern districts, though Hindustani music has entered into Moodalapaya, they are not perfectly blended. They are standing on the stage for competition with the old tunes. Hindustani music is specially used for women characters (people recognize this as Hindustani songs). The tunes of these songs of female characters

have been set, imitating the *cheeses*(songs) of popular ragas of *Uttaradi.* For these songs tabla is being played at the background, whereas for the other songs *Maddale* (mridangam) is used. They are well aware that these songs cannot be sung either as background or as foreground. Therefore the *Uttaradi* songs of the female character are sung by the performer himself/herself. These songs, which are set to the simple *theen the,* have been received with great honour and appreciation by both the performers and the audience.

The *Suthradhara* himself sings for the male characters. As is said earlier, in some of the songs, gap is given after each stanza, giving space for speech, and then the next stanza is sung. This system is prevalent in the eastern districts.

No other folk drama has as distinguished a background music as Moodalapaya has. In it, invariably four to six people are there in the chorus. The artistes who perform small roles, come and join the chorus after finishing their performance on the stage. Thus, naturally the number of singers in the chorus grows upto 10-12. All of them together taking up the words *'Hey Deva....'* in high pitch stretching it long, adds to the grandeur of the heroic *rasa* of Bayalata. As the character is on with its speech, the chorus sitting behind passes its comments through exclamations like *'shabash' 'vahvah' 'shahabo shoba',* which makes way for the further heroic movement. Thus the chorus is a very significant part of this Bayalata.

***Geetha Shipa* (Song Image):**

In Moodalapaya, the song with the most popular tune runs with three kinds of rhythm. At the beginning, it is in *vilambith laya* (slow movement) and then moves on to the second and the fourth rhythm adding momentum to it. There are distinct places suggested for the change in rhythm. The *Suthradhara* himself suggests it. It may be suggested in the tone of singing itself.

The First rhythm:

Suthradhara: Madam, I shall tell you
A trick. Tell you a trick.
You clever woman, act
According to it

Chorus : (Repeat the line sung by the Suthradhara)

Su : About the trick played by Dasharatha.

Ch : (Repeat - twice)

Su : What shall I say, what shall I say
I feel terribly sad.

Ch : Madam I shall tell you a trick
Act according to it you clever woman

Second rhythm: Madam I shall tell you a trick.
Act according to it, you clever woman -

Ch : (" " twice)
Su : Listen to me Madam
Ch : Tha . . . Thaiyya
Su : My words
Ch : Tha . . . Thaiyya
Su : I shall tell -
Ch : Tha . . . . Thaiyya

Fourth Rhythm:

Su : (High pitch) Listen to me Madam my words
I shall tell you.
(Down) . . Aa . . . (Down to lower shatja)

Ch : (In high shatja) Kadkadatha Kadkadatha . . . dhittha

These codes do not apply to all the songs in all regions. Regional variations are there. But there is one tune, which is common to all regions. A prayer to Ganapathi called *'Sreegouri Varaputhra'* is not only common all over North Karnataka, but its tune also is very much popular. Some of the Moodlapaya songs are sung in eastern districts in the same rhythm.

In Raichur region, the song is extended by attaching some new piece to it. It is called '*anda'*. After one stanza is over, the same matter will be stretched with pieces of words in rhyme. It moves along two or three *swaras*, either ahead or behind the supporting *swara (shatja*). Example:

Song : That monster wouldn't leave me, imprison me immediately. He doesn't have any concern. Oh it's my fate.

Anda : He is a monster
I am helpless
He would take me
He is relentless
Villainous monster

This *'anda'* is not the poet's composition. These are composed by others according to the form of the poet's song. It is said that Nabisaheb is a famous '*anda*' poet of this region. It is impossible to find out the composers of these '*andas*' because they are very simple compositions and anyone can do it easily.

These elements are there in the western region also, though they do not have names. In the verse 'My mistress I shall'[3] the part that comes before the fourth rhythm, 'Listen to me mistress. *Tha Thaiyya'*[7] is not composed by the poet. They are words which are used traditionally. They differ depending on the context. Like 'Listen to me O King' or 'Listen to me O Minister' etc.

When the song is moving in the second rhythm, the chorus giving '*Koach' (playing on all the instruments together)* in high pitch singing 'Hey Deva...' is commonly found everywhere. In songs addressed to the King it becomes *'Hey Raja...'* also. Around Haveri when '*Koach'* is given without singing '*Hey Deva....*' or anything, they simply do it by humming *'a... a....'*.

Some '*boles'* (words) are added to the end of the songs. The songs that end up with fourth rhythm end up with the chorus singing *'Kadkoda tha kadkoda tha dhitha* (high shatja). This is common everywhere. In Raichur region it ends up as '*hodi dandana thaitha thaitha aha'* also. While ending the song in the 2nd rhythm, in Dharawada region they use still longer boles: '*Tha kad thom janana dhigidhigi dhigidhigi dhittha I Thaitha Dhitha, thontha dhittha Thai*tha *dhigidhigidhigidhigi I Dhittho dinna kada kadatha'*.

Musical Instruments:

The main among the musical instruments is the *maddale(*

mridangam). It is said that in olden days empty gourds were used for supporting *swaras.* Or inserting a string to kerosine tin and attaching a stick to it, they used to bring out the musical sound, by pulling it at regular intervals. Its '*jeem jeem*' sound was the shruthi for their songs. After the advent of harmonium, these instruments disappeared. Today, harmonium has become inevitable in Bayalatas. *Maddale* is sufficiently huge in size. Some experienced artistes play the regular boles of Carnatic music. The others play, following the rhythm on the basis of calculated guesswork. It is a long time after the use of maddale' was stopped in the western region. In its place they are using *thabla.* The bronze cymbals are used everywhere. They are called by different names like '*gundadala*', '*sottedala*', '*aatada thaala*', etc. Suthradhara and three-four background singers use these cymbals. The violin, which was common earlier in Moodalapaya has become rare nowadays. This also has stepped back because of harmonium. Instruments like *mukhaveena* and *sanaadi* are used at the background. The combined music of all these instrument has filled Bayalata with life.

Dance:

Moodalapaya is a Bayalata in which dance is the major item. Normally a performer is asked, 'What role are you dancing?' and not 'what role are you performing?' Here, dancing is more important than understanding the character, wearing costumes and makeup and acting according to it. When Moodalapaya rose to the stage from its musical style and assumed the form of Bayalata, a number of folk dances have influenced it directly and indirectly. Therefore we must know that these dance styles have not come from any classical origin. So, it is difficult to agree with the view that 'Among the three major varieties of dance programmes found in Poorvaranga (introductory part) ritual, - *shuddha*, *Gondali* and *Perane*, Yakshagana has accepted *Gondali* system, and Moodalapaya has accepted *Perane* system. This is *as obvious as the gooseberry on your palm.*'[57] More research work is needed to be done on this. At present anyway, we have to agree with the opinion that the Doddata dance resembles the simple folk dance.'[58]

It is not right to say that in Moodalapaya, there is only a small difference between the dances of male and female characters. Undoubtedly, their forms are different. The male dance is in accordance with the impetuous and violent attitude of male characters. The dance of the female characters is gentle and pleasant. There is the possibility of the dance of the male characters moulded as the combination of *Hejjemela, Purvanthara Kunitha* and *Datta Kunitha*. Here, more importance is given to the calculation of steps. These dances are identified by the number of steps in it like three-steps, five- steps and six- steps. As the performer's complete attention is focused on the movement of his feet, there is no scope for facial expressions or *hastha mudrikas* (position of palms and fingers). Backward and forward movements are there. For suggesting the emphasis on the main point in the speech, it is common to leap up once and stamp on the ground with force. What might be the condition of the wooden planks used for the attic? The performer who leaps up a lot and breaks at least one plank, gets a good name as a successful performer. By the time he finishes performing this crude dance in three or four styles, he becomes totally exhausted. After performing these leapings, which is meant only to show one's strength and energy, the performer will be panting so much that he cannot deliver his speech further. Still, the rustics feel greatly thrilled to see these characters in splendid costumes, dancing and thundering.

The dance of the female characters, though unable to articulate finer feelings, is not as rough as that of the male character. They do not go to break the planks. Their dances, based on the calculation of steps, take two, three, four, five- upto nine steps. When the male character does his performance using only his legs, the female character moves her hands and neck, shaking her body a little bit. Once upon a time, it is said that the dance of the female characters used to give rise to fine feelings. Dr. B. B. Hendi says that, in about 1935, when he saw Bayalatas, the dances of female characters used to express feelings and passions appropriate to contexts like love, sorrow etc.'[60] Subsequently, the efforts for learning dances were not required. Things were managed through artificial means of imitation.

Earlier, there was the system of bringing the female characters in between the play and make them dance. They danced rising up and bending down, moving forward and backward, and showing simple *mudras* (gestures with palms and fingers). For example the dance of plucking flowers. It is a simple and beautiful scene where the performer puts her steps forward softly and acts like plucking flowers from the plant. We may see that these different dances have different cultural and regional background. It is noteworthy that they symbolize the actions of softening the cotton, breaking the corns, heaping the crops-connected with agriculture.[61] The *kisagala* dance (dance pressing the front part of the feet once and then the heels), prevalent in some places remind us of Bharatha natyam. This might have come a long time ago as imitation. Moodalapaya dance on the whole, does not have the dancing facility to articulate delicate feelings which Yakshagana has got.[62]

In some regions, as the dance proceeds, uttering the boles of the *maddale* following the rhythm is done by *Suthradhara*. This is not done in a haphazard manner, but goes according to counts of *roopaka, adi* and *ata thalas* for which the dance is performed. You can identify them only if you are sensitized to them through practice. The *suthradharas*, of late, have stopped uttering them. They are also called '*gatthu*'. They come at the end of the dance.'

I. The '*gatthu*' that are common to all characters:

1) Thaithaka dhinna thaithaka dhinna thaithaka dhinna thaithaka dhinna thai thai thai thai thaka dhinna thai thai/ Thaithaka dhinna thai/ Thadaginitha thadaginitha thadaginitha

2) Dhiththai thaitha kitatha/ kita thath thath kitatha/ Thai thalangu thadagith thontha

3) Thaa thayaa Thaa thayaa dhigithaththaya dhigi thaththayaa/ Dhigi thaththayaa thai thalanga thadagith thadagitha thomitha.

II. For the dance of the male characters:

1) The thonga dhiththonga kadathaijanam dadhithaijanam/ Kadathaka thaathaya kadathaka thaathaya kadathaka tabathaya

2) Kadakadathom jantha jantha migithaka/ Dhinna kidathakatha dhinna kadathaka tha dhinna kadathaka tha.

III. For the dance of female characters:

Kadathaka dhaathai dhaathai kidathaka dhaathaka dhinam

Thadhim gidathaka thadhim gidathaka thadhim gidathaka/ Thaathridhiththai thata kadathaka daa.

Suthradhara: (The Stage Manager)

It has already been said that the Moodalapaya poets had the Sanskrit dramas as their model. They imported the *Suthradhara* and *Vidushaka* (clown) from there. Though they have come to them from Sanskrit, they are completely owned by them. Suthradhara is called by other names like *Bhagawatha, Nayaka, Mummela Master. Kathegar, Metithal* etc. The word Nayaka is more prevalent in Raichur region. In Belgaum district calling him *Mummela* Master and *Metithal* is more appropriate, because they actually describe the function performed by the *Suthradhara.*

The Suthradhara's function is more at the preparation of the Bayalata, off the stage. That is why he is called the master. In the eastern districts, there are artistes who have taken it as their profession. Their whole asset is their tho rough knowledge of 8-10 stories. They keep moving from village to village. In the western districts there are no such professional artistes. The best singer of the village is the master. He learns songs from his elders and practises them. He gives training to the performers in singing and delivering dialogues for months. Teaching them dance is not his responsibility. The dance learning process comes from tradition. The elders of the village train the youngsters.

The *Suthradhara is* greatly excited on the day of performance. The 'master' who works for payment till then, is respected as *'Guru'* on that day. Everything should be done following his instructions. As he is the person conducting the show, in a way he is the '*Nayaka*' of the day. He will be standing on the right side of the stage with the background instrumentalists. The initial *Rangapooja* (stage worship) will be done by him and the show starts with the prayer songs. After *Ganasthuthi* (prayer), he humbly prays Ganapathi who comes on the stage to bless him so that the show will go on smoothly, without any obstructions. In the same way, he appeals to Goddess Sharada

and Balagopala and his request will be sanctioned. (This episode is clearly described with details in '*Rangaprayoga*' (Stage Performance). After finishing his affairs with Gods, he begins to talk to the '*saarathi*' who comes on the stage. Ordering the *saarathi* 'to introduce the lords and kings on the stage to the audience, and withdraw from there' is his job. He will be standing aside, singing the songs connected with the episodes. Sometimes he may come on stage in between. If the *saarathi* mischievously compares the grand looks of the Lords and the Kings to *Holi Kamanna* or some other Gods, the master simply warns him. 'They are Lords and Kings. You should talk to him with due respect.' It is clear that this *Suthradhara* who, is not having any organic connection with the story, is the shadow of the *Suthradhara* of Sanskrit dramas. Since his main job is singing, he is called '*Mummyala*'. The name '*Metithala*' must also have come for the same reason.

It is said that the *Suthradhara*, who at present is only singing songs for the performers, used to tell things related to the episodes to the audience in between his singing.

These aspects of the story that act as a link between two episodes, which help the development of the stories, and which cannot be told through the performers, used to be told by the *Suthradhara* who sang them. The *Vachanas* and *Kavipadas* that come in Markandeya's story reach the audience through *suthradhara* himself.

The *Vachana* is sung by *Suthradhara* himself.[64] This is in fact, a prose piece. Perhaps it should be sung in a systematic tune with *alapana,* and not in the tone used by the performers' speech. In the same work, there is another *Kavipada* (poet's words):

> Munipathi Naarada banda/ Ghanasura lokadalindaa/ Harigovinda smaraneyaninda suruchari brahmananda. Ambaradinda kumbhiniyinda sambhritha gayanadinda/ Paramananda smaraneyalinda varabheemeshwaranenda

(Though this is *Kavipada*, it is *suthradhara*'s song. It is noteworthy that the *Vachanas* and *Padas* come under different classifications. *Suthradhara* gives the knowledge of the character which comes next, as well as the context. This is also done in order to inform the audience about what the character thinks.)

Suthradhara: Aalisida ambarada vaakyamam kolanıluvutha/ Mayuravaahana mukhyaraadavarodane/ Aalochısidana hadananu kelendu pelıdanu[66]

(Mayuravahana told the important people about the divine words that he had heard and discussed with them)

The speeches and songs of this type are rarely found in recent times, almost forgotten.

Saarathi:

Though there are instances of the poets having called the *saarathi* a *vidushaka* (baffoon), he is familiarly known as *saarathi*. Originally the *vidushaka* of Sanskrit plays has taken a new form here, adding some regional features on himself. The *Vidushaka* who is called either *Kodangi* or *Hanumanayaka* in Yakshagana has become *saarathi* in Moodalapaya. His power on the stage goes beyond limit. He is the unanointed hero of the entire show.[67] There are no restrictions on his tricks, songs and speeches. The actions and activities of this character that crosses the line of decency are loved by the audience. In the serious atmosphere created by the *veera* and *raudra* rasas, the *Sarathi's* humour runs throughout. The *Suthradhara* of Moodalapaya appears once and withdraws in the *Poorva ranga and* does not appear again. All the duties to be done by him like controlling the entry and exit of the characters etc. are executed by the *saarathi*. Sometimes he performs the *Rangapooja* which is the portfolio of the *Suthradhara* and he receives boons from Ganapathi and Sharada. As he has the freedom which the *vidushaka* of Sanskrit drama does not have, he should be considered the combination of both the *Sudthradhara* and the *Vidushaka*.[68]

Most of the themes of Moodalapaya are related to battles. One should go to the battlefield on a chariot. *Saarathi* of the Bayalata, in the beginning, with the purpose of helping the elaboration of the story, suggests the driving of the chariot to the battle field (sometimes to other places too). Hence his name became *Sarathi*. However, the *sarathi* runs not only the chariot, but has the capacity to run the entire show. Most of the characters confide their worries, sorrows, pride, pain of separation etc. with the *Sarathi*. He is the faithful and trustworthy servant to all characters. The characters very freely tell

the *sarathi* to do their work or fulfill their needs. Sometimes their words are in the form of songs. If someone sets off for battle, it is common to sing 'Drive the chariot fast O *Saarathi.*' Suppose Indra wants to call Shachi (his wife) to the stage. He sings:

> 'You bring O *saarathi* my dear wife here
> Hurry up O *sarathi*[69]

After the prayer songs and boon-granting ritual is over, the *Sarathi* comes over to the stage. There is a short song related to the *Sarathi*'s entry to the stage, prevalent at Chennamma's Kittur of Belgaum District. As the *suthradhara* sings this song, *saarathi* enters the stage dancing -

> Here is the *Vidushaka*
> Coming on to the stage
> On to the splendid stage
> Holding the bitter leaves
> Bunch in his hand
> Coming on to stage.

According to the rhythm of this song, the *Sarathi* dances in his own free style.'[7] After the dance is over, taking rest for a while, he begins to talk to the *Suthradhara.* In this context, the words that the *Saarathi* speaks at first are very pleasant and lively. They are filled with alliterations at every step. That which is prevalent in Shiggamvi of Dharawad District is as follows:

'Sadya sadya maddali thala badakotha, gadlo gadla madikotha, madhye aaru thaasa raathriyalli, sarvaru bhardanda nidreyalliruvaga, saddu illade sakalaru onde muddiyagi horabiddu bandu, ee huddedarana, dardu illade udhdhatthanada udyogavannu nadesiruva aprabudhdhare, neevu daariddeeri, nimma madhdhathadaararu yaaru, embudannu nirdharisi helidare nimmannu sadyakke udhdhaara maaduvenu. Illavaadare nimma mele khatle haaki badamash bukkige daakhal maadenu, bal-khabardaar ('Who are you tell me, who at this time of night, raising the noise of drums and cymbals at this unearthly hour, when all are sleeping tight? You fools and immature and impertinent, I shall help you only if you tell the truth .Otherwise I shall file a complaint against you and record your names in the book of stupids; be careful!)

After his conversation and compromise with the *Suthradhara* are over, he comes, as per the orders of *Suthradhara,* to introduce

the characters on the stage to the audience. It is noteworthy that the *Sarathi,* who normally speaks colloquial language, speaks in a formal language with the characters.

1) Bho swami, dheemantha shreemantharaagi vaibhavadinda ee rangamantapadalli shobhisuttiruva thaavaaru, thamma naamaankithavenu?'

('O master, you who are shining splendidly on this stage with your wealth and intelligence, please tell me who you are, and what your good name is')

2 'Thaavu…inthavarendu nanagu illi neredıruva prekshaka mahaneeyarig, thilidu banduthu. Thaavu thamm araajamantapavannu bittu ee sabhamantapakke baralu kaaranavenu?'

(Myself and the gentle audience here have come to know that you are so and so. May I know the reason for your coming to this *Sabhamantapa* leaving your *Rajamantapa?)*

Thus *Saarathi* speaks to the characters reverently. However, when the characters question him back, demanding the details about himself, his colloquial language re-enters.

Here the words of the Saarathi are fascinating because of their folk flavour, social awareness, light humour and self-abuse, along with rhymes and alliterations. Some of the examples are:

1) Hey Raaja, jarkateyannu uttu, harkangiyannu thottu berki annutthiruva harki kwaanana haanga sarkaaradavarannu darkaara maadadantha moorkha saarathi moorkha saarathi annuttare.

(O your majesty, one who is in rags, looking like a he-buffalo kept for sacrifice, one who does not care for the government, people call me stupid *saarathi.*

2) Elai Kambugreevane, hombala, dambala, ambaavathigalemba ombattu graamagalannu umbudara ambali purthege umbali haakisikondu sambala illade dudiyuva gambheera saarathiyembuvaru deva..

(O Kambugreeva, serving nine villages like Hombala, Dambala . . . Ambavathi etc. without any Sambala (wages) people call me gambheera (dignified) *Saarathi.*

3) Avva, madari rumbaalaa,chaduri hambaala bedarade idiraagi ninthu sadaraagi ninthu maathanaaduva bedara badagi chadura saarathiyennuththaare.

(Mother, one who stands face to face without any fear and speaks freely, people call me clever sarathi.)

4) Hottege koolilla, thottangige tholilla, attikkuva henathigu nanagu thalilla makkalige koolilla, ishtu divasavaadaru bittee kelasa maadikotha hottee parivi illade thiruguva saarathi ennuththare. (Nothing to eat, no the sleeves on shirt, no adjustment between me and my wife, who cooks and serves me, children are hungry, working for no wages, roaming without bothering about filling the belly, people call me *sarathi.*)

If there is some delay in the characters coming on to the stage, if they are still preparing for their makeup and costumes, keeping the audience alert and awake is the job of *sarathi.* He opens up all his capital from within. Sometimes he becomes mischievous in his talk to the audience directly. He sings a number of songs. These songs, in a lighter tone, attract the audience. After his stock of songs gets exhausted, he does not hesitate to sing even film songs. In between these songs he cracks jokes, passes comments on some popular personalities, wealthy and dignified people of high status in the village, and tells some insignificant folk stories - thus creating an interesting situation. In such cases no one thinks of any decency or indecency.

Apart from singing his lighthearted songs individually, when he appears as a character in the story, the *saarathi* sometimes sings the songs related to the character too. If he is appointed as an announcer, beating the drum, he sings -

Beat the dangura (announcement) I shall O Master
Beat the dangura
Following the Majesty's orders
I shall beat the dangura. [73]

Whenever he gets an opportunity, he throws his clever eyes on the people and winksat them. At that time he mixes his humour with irony too. When he goes to beat the dangura he says 'Elai, the carpenter who makes furniture, the pot maker who makes pots, the haruva (Brahmin) who eats like a glutton, the watchman who drinks alcohol like sponge- to all these people what I tell is .....etc.'[74] and thus goes on describing the real qualities of the people of various occupations one by one.

The *Hanumanayaka* of Yakshagana and the *Saarathi* of Moodalapaya are not one and the same. Though their purpose is the same, in their methods of execution, sharp differences are seen.

Hanumanayaka's humour is of refined quality. In Yakshagana, 'Flattering the kings at their order to please them, is his job'.[75] In Moodalapaya, making the characters braggingly introduce themselves is his job. Differences are there between the two in their costumes and makeup, apart from the cultural and regional differences.

The character of the *saarathi* is not the poet's creation. It is the creation of the folk. The songs and the speeches of this character are not found in the poet's work. They are there in the tradition. After they were firmly rooted in the tradition, the recent script writers included them in the manuscript. The humour, satire and irony of the *Sarathi* are not the expressions of an individual, but those of the society. The *saarathi* is more familiar with the audience than any other character. He is more intimate with the audience. That is why he has been given an important status in the Bayalata. This applies to the entire Indian folk theatre.'[76]

Costumes and Make-up:

Unlike the special attention given to the *veshas* of Yakshagana, much care has not been taken about Moodalapaya *veshas.* Though fixed costumes for fixed characters have been identified, those rules are not followed strictly. The characters have been classified on a common ground. All these characters belonging to one class have the same costumes. E.g: If Karna, Arjuna, Lakshmana, Dharma, Abhimanyu and Indrajithu belong to one class, Duryodhana, Ravana and Kichaka belong to another category. Since the women characters are mostly Goddesses and Queens, it may be generally said that much differences are not there among them.

Normally the facial makeup of all the characters is done by smearing rose coloured powder (except Rama, Shiva and the monsters). Mixing a little red and blue powder to some white powder called *sapheda*, the rose powder is prepared. Earlier, it is said that they used to prepare it by using *aradala* (yellow orpiment or sulphur). The king wears a wig, letting loose his long hair at the back. He has

a crown too. If the performer does not have a moustache, a thick, artificial moustache made of wool is stuck. The monstrous characters have still thicker moustaches. A coloured cloth is tied to the shoulders, which touches the ground at the back. They wear a silk or white shirt. Bracelet, armlet and abundant amount of coloured chains are worn. In eastern regions, such characters have shoulder-crowns even today. They should be holding either a sword or a bow and arrow in their hands. In some regions, the tradition of holding a big bouquet is found.

There is no much difference between the monsters and fierce characters. Grand shoulder-crowns, giant moustaches seen prominent on the face, huge crowns that reach the ceiling of the attic, large amount of garlands hanging on the neck - these are the special features of these characters. They are holding either a mace or an arrow in one hand, and a red cloth in the other. There are socks and anklets on their legs.

Special crowns are worn by female characters. All the gorgeous silk clothes of yellow colour are seen on the stage on the day of the Bayalata show. As all women characters wear shining sarees, it is difficult to identify the difference between the queens and maids. They are fully laden with ornaments - either real gold or artificial - from head to foot. Hands are covered with bangles, and necks are filled with chains.

Blue colour is smeared on Hanuma, Shiva, Rama and Krishna. Hanumantha is adorned with a hairy shirt and red trousers, and red colour is smeared on his nose. Sages like Narada have long beards and moustaches of white fibre and a robe of orange colour. *Saarathi*'s costumes do not have any restrictions. The freedom that he takes in his role, he takes in his *vesha* also. He wears coloured shirt and breeches. A turban wound around the head in a hotch-potch manner, or a coloured cap, peculiar designs of white stripes on the face, one or two chains around the neck, and a bunch of neem leaves in hand - this is how the *Sarathi* is adorned with. Earlier he used to have a crown, shoulder-crown, sword and mace - all made of wood. But, because of the influence of drama companies, of late, these gorgeous *veshas* are dwindling.

***Rangamantapa* (Stage) :**

The stage is built commensurating with the gorgeous look of Moodalapaya. The Moodalapaya stage is called *Atta, Chappara, Handara, or Chatta* (Raichur). Though it is Bayalata, it is not performed in the open air, outside the village. Either in front of the houses of the people of high status, or in front of the village temple, a large attic is built. Its construction work starts two days in advance. Nothing is done till the auspicious hour is fixed. If the auspicious hour is fixed a few days before the show, a pillar is installed in advance. Fixing cartwheels on both sides, and connecting them with beams, they form a foundation at first. Then, a large wooden plank (large beams) is put across oil barrels kept on both sides. The rear portion is covered with a tent. The left-rights of the front portion are kept open. The portion above it has a pendal, also covered with a tent. The tent is spread over the planks too.

The construction of the stage, of late, now has lost its grandeur and has been made simple. About the stage that was built at Hirebagewadi of Belgaum district in 1905, for the Bayalata on the episode, '*Thripura Samhara*' a performer has written like this: 'We had built our stage with three floors on which *thripuras (three towns)* had been decorated in three colours and we had made arrangement for their fast rotation. The pendal was looking splendid. Some renowned artistes had drawn a number of beautiful pictures related to the gist of the story and had stuck them on the pendal.'[77] This statement throws light on the elegance and beauty of the stages of those times, as well as the technical skills of the folk. There are some old people who talk about such constructions even now. So it is not based on imagination.'[78] But today it is common to see the Bayalata stages imitating the artificially built stages of company dramas.

Light:

Earlier, the arrangement of light used to supplement the sound and fury of Moodalapaya. Fixing three high pillars on the left side of the stage in triangular shape, keeping a cauldron on its top, and putting cow dung patties soaked in kerosene, two persons used to sit by its

side. Its next step is making a torch. They used to tie huge torches on both sides. The terrifying quality of this light cannot be created anywhere else. When the monsters dance passionately, *aradala* powder was sprinkled on the torches in order to make their flames flare up suddenly. Such lights, and the torches have disappeared now, and in the place of gas lights, electricity lights have come.

Prayer:

After performing puja in the greenroom, the *Suthradhara* comes over to the stage with the background singers and musical instruments. Then the prayer begins. The method of prayer is not alike everywhere. In some regions, five songs called '*Sthuthipanchaka*' are sung. But really they are only three songs. The prayer starts with '*Sri Vighnarja Pahimam*' (this song has been already referred to in the '*Sthuthi*' part of this book). The next song is '*Sri Shambhavi Sukumara.*' As the three stanzas of this song are considered different, one song is counted as three.

Sri Shambhavi-Sukumarashreethajana shubhamandaara/ Paashaankushadhara dheera paapasamhaara/ Paramaananda vishaala shreegouree varabaala/ Shivaganalola/ Vidyaavaridhichandra vidyadharanutha saandra/ Sadvaradaathamuneendra vinutha ganendra/ Surachiragunabharana suravarasevithacharana/ Siribheemeshana karana bhaktharodhdharana.

After singing each stanza as an independent song, the '*Sthuthipanchaka*' (five prayer songs) comes to an end with a *gurusthuthi* called '*manabhimanavu ninnadu guruve*' (Honour and dishonour are yours O Guru!). This calculation of *panchaka* is relevant only in some regions. In other regions, the common song is '*Srigauri varaputhra*' (one of its text has already come in the '*sthuthi*' part of this book). As it is prevalent widely, it has been easily attacked by change in the text. The text prevalent in Bijapura district of North is as follows:

Sri gauri varaputhra shathithaabhave chaarithra/ yogisajjana sthothra shubhgathra/ Nitilanethrana suthane nigamaagama gocharane/ Phanipaakankana kundaladharane/ Shankara paaliso mankaali goureesha kinkara swaradinda anthahkaruna maado/ Vidyaaka adhipathi maaduve nimma sthuthi/ Neebandu kaayenn agouriya varaputhra.

The prayer to Lord Shankara is offered in the same Ganapathi prayer. But the popular print at the end *'Podaviyol Kuduthiniya odeya Bheemeshana'* has been stripped off.

It is already told that the method of praying is not the same in all regions. In Belgaum and Dharawada, Ganapathi and Sharada are prayed after the initial *Shivasthuthi*. The two *Shivasthuthis* of this region are as follows:

1) Shambho Madeva paalayaa thaapasamanaa/ Thaapasamanaa Thaapasamanaa/ Shambhoja mathi paalaya/ Damboli paani veni Shambhojanabhimukhi/ Jambhaari vairi vairiShambhothraangiyu kamala.

(This is a piece of song composed by Swarabhooshana Shivayogi. The original song is sufficiently distorted.)

2) Gouriya priyasaagara kaaruna moorthi/Karuna moorthi Karuna moorthi/ Karuniso Harashankaraa/ Suragana vanditha varagala koduvaatha/ Duritha kashtagalannu parihariso devane.

(O merciful Lord Shankar, please solve all our problems and bless us.)

On singing these songs Shiva does not come on to the stage. After that, *'Srigourivaraputhra'* is sung and then Ganapathi enters. After a light dance, he sits on the chair, and the *Suthradhara* begins to make his entreaties. The situation is normally as follows:

Su : O Lord, this poor man is bowing at your feet.
Ga : May you be blessed O Suthradhara. Get up.
Su : As you wish O Lord.
Ga : O good Suthradhara, When I was sitting on the original seat of Sreeshyla Mallikarjuna in Kailasa when on both my left and right sides the great Nandi Bhringi, Narada, Saraswathi, Garudas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Kimpurushas etc. were dancing, your melodious Vanisthuthi fell on my ears, and pleased by it I have come here. Tell me immediately what your wish is. I assure you I fulfill it.

Su: O lord, Vigneshwara, on your feet what I request you is that I have decided to give a show on the episode - now to entertain the folk and drown my people in the ocean of great joy. However in my show, since little boys and ignorant also are taking part, suppose some mistakes occur, you have to excuse them and bless us so that no obstacles shall come our way.

Ga: My son, O Suthradhara, I bless you for the smooth running of your show. For solving the problem of the ignorant boys' inability to speak, you should

send your prayer to Sri Vagdevi. It is already late after I came here. Let me think of going back.

Su: Yes O Lord. Please, you make a move.

After this, following Ganapathi's order, prayer is offered to Vagdevi. As the *Suthradhara* sings the following song, goddess Sharada enters the stage dancing. The dance of that character is distinct in its own way. It does not resemble any other dance of Moodalapaya.

Vaagdeviye baa shreesharade baa/ Baare.. neere ./ Devee.. bare. neere../ Akkanda vaani amritha bhaashe/Haasyadeeshe devee haasyadeeshe/ Nirjara namipe nirmala charithe Maathe.. daathe../ Shaantha puraadheesha shaanthesha vittalana/ Vaani... Vani...

(Come O Vagdevi, come Sri Sharada,
Come O Goddess of
Incessant speech, divine language
Mistress of humour you are
Ever young, I bow to you
Having a clean history
O Mother, you giver
Master of Shanthaura Shanthesh Vittala's
Vani, O you clever.[81]

Suthradhara's conversation with goddess Sharada moves in the same style as his conversation with Ganapathi. But unlike Ganapathi counselling about Sharada *sthuthi* and putting the responsibility on someone else's shoulders, Sharada does not do that. She leaves the stage, after granting the boon, and after putting an end to the episode.

Balagopala:

The tradition of Balagopala coming and blessing in the *Poorvaranga (Prologue)* of Yakshagana is prevalent in the eastern region. A boy performs this role. This is like a preparatory course. The song about him is normally as follows:

Gopaala baalane Gopeejaara chorane/ Govardhana giriyaneththi govugala kaaydaathane/Garudagamanaa kamalanayanaa/ Kausthubhaabharanaa gopala baalane.

(O Gopala, who has lifted the Govardhana mountain, who has protected the cows etc)

After the prayer standing behind the curtain, Balagopala enters the stage. In some regions, there is the odd practice of Balagopala entering the stage instead of Ganapathi. After the dance is over, unlike Ganapathi, Balagopala does not sit in the chair. Standing, he begins to talk. But the one who starts chatting with him is not the *Suthradhara*. It is the *Sarathi*. He does not beg for the boon all of a sudden. This episode moves on with the speeches of *Peethika, Namankitha*, and *Sabha*, introducing the remaining characters to the audience:

Sarathi	:	Sir, thou who have come here, who thou art, tell me , Ho!
Balagopala	:	(Peethika) Good O thou human being, the one who hath entered this beautiful stage asking this auspicious image who you are, tell me O dootha shiromani, who you are.
Ba Go	:	(Namankitha) Good O Saarathi, we are born in the womb of the great Vasudeva and Devak,who destroy the wicked and protect the good. Sarathi, you may understand that this moonlike bright figure is Balakrishnamurthy.
Sa	:	I understand that thou art Balakrishnamurthy. The audiences gathered here also have understood. O Swami, what is the reason for thy coming on this stage, leaving thine own place?
Ba.Go	:	Good. Elai Sarathi, the reason for my coming to this pleasant and splendid place amid the gathering is to fulfill the requests of my devotees over here. Did you understand, Sarathi?
Sa	:	Swami, who are you blessing with the boon?
Ba.Go	:	(Song) The one who worships my feet without being aware of it. I am granting wealth to him.
(Words)		Good Sarathi I shall protect my devotees who pray in the beginning of whatever work they are doing, by fulfilling all their wishes I am Bala, *Bhavyagunasheela* (great virtuous being)

Song . I have brought the Vedas from the bottom of the sea, after killing Giant Somakasura.

Words Good O Sarathi. Listen well to the further story. Am I not the same Madhusudana who has protected the Earth by entering into the sea, killing the Giant Somakasura and bringing the Vedas up on to the earth?

Sa . Swami, we have planned to perform the episode '.. .'

You have to protect and bless us.

Ba : Good O Saarathi. Why not? I have blessed thee with the boon. It is a long time after we came here. May the further part of the story run smoothly and with great joy. Now let us go to our Gokula, come on O Sarathi. Did you understand about my background?

In the beginning, this episode might have been still bigger. But the above song, which is in use at present, does not seem to be a complete text. Perhaps, in olden days, the song giving all the details of Dashavathara might have been there.

The Entry of Characters:

The mild characters enter the stage from the green room wearing a mask on their face. The demons and monsters come, dancing all the way from the green room. As they come fast towards the stage, jumping and hopping in a frenzy, in the light of torches, with the beating of drums, the audiences suddenly wake up from their doze and sit straight. Crackers are burst to create horror. Sometimes these characters climb the stage from amidst the audience dancing all the way. Sometimes the mild characters come dancing by the side of the curtain. When there is a court scene, the bed-sheet, carpet or shawl held across the characters are removed, after all the characters are seated.

In the eastern part of Karnataka, there is the practice of nullifying the effect of evil eyes on every character. Depending upon the size and status of the characters, lemon, coconut and ash-gourds are cut open in front of them. In some regions, coconut is normally broken before each character. But this system, which is so strictly followed in the east, is not at all known in the west.

Laleema:

Laleema is the letters of the song sung with systematic notations at the background in the contexts of the chariot drive, battle-march etc. These are bound by the dignified beats and boles of the *maddale*. The variety that is seen in the old *Suthradharas* cannot be found in the present generation. The pieces, with refrains of 'La' sounds like 'Lali Lali Lalitho lali lali" are melodious to hear. It is also called 'lalibidthi'. Lalima is also of the same type. But here, they sing the boles of mridangam. When they sing '*Thanthaka jana dhinthaka jana thom thom thaka janatha; Dhim thaka jana thomthaka jana dhim thaka janatha. Thaitha dheem thaka janatha*' to the beats of *thala* and *maddale* and the music of *mukhaveena*, it naturally creates an interesting atmosphere. Though it varies from region to region, its purpose is the same.

Other Things:

Normally, a single episode is performed for one night. But there are three independent stories in an episode of a single title. There are a number of trilogies, like this. Though the name of the episode is '*Prameela*' the stories of Sudhanva, Prameela and Babruvahana are incorporated in it. (The episodes of Sudhanva and Babruvahana have been written independently too.) Similarly, in the story of 'Devi' three independent narratives of *Madhukaitabhavadha* (The Goddess killing of the demons Madhu and Kaitabha), *Mahishasuramardana* (killing the demon Mahishasura) and *Shumbha-Nishumbha vadha* (killing of the demons Shumbha and Nishumbha) are incorporated.

The general impression is that Moodalapaya was born and brought up amidst the amateur theatre artistes. But many may be surprised to hear that the Harijanas of Kappagallu of Bellary district have made it their occupation. It is said that the company used to be run by only four or five people. The strange thing is that a girl used to perform the role of '*Suthradhara*'. They had given their performance outside the district of Bellary also. Now this company has stopped working.

The present folks are losing their enthusiasm for Moodalapaya. For the youths of the villages, who are fascinated by the artificial

glamour of modern civilisation , Moodalapaya looks like a stupid show. They do not have any interest in learning its dances. They have given their minds to the company dramas of low quality. The heat of the influence of these dramas has affected Moodalapaya also. The men performing women's roles had been a tradition in Moodalapaya. But, of late, women are brought to Bayalatas too, just as in dramas. The drama actresses have started performing in Bayalatas also, making use of this opportunity. About a Bayalata called '*Janguteyata*', Dr. B. S. Gagimutt says: The Nattuvina (Story Teller) plays on the *Jaagate* (a metal disc) and sings, and gives an idea to the maddale-player, of *thala* and *laya*. He comes on to the attic, makes others dance the *sogu's* and puts an end to it after breaking the thala. The *Janguteatas* are especially, the stories of Adishakthi. Those who perform this are goldsmiths, pot makers etc., who are the worshippers of Adhishakthi'[83]. These details make it clear that they used to play on the *Jagate* at the time of performance. Apart from *jagate*, another instrument they used was *maddale*. Perhaps Gadgimutt has called the Moodalapaya, where *jaagate* was used with maddale, the *janguteata*. There are changes from region to region in Moodalapaya in the use of instruments (E.g.: *sanadi*, violin etc). Hence there is the possibility of *jaagate* being used only in one region. Besides, there is nobody who has seen it, or who can tell about it, for throwing light on it now.

Notes:

1. Simpi Linganna interprets *Dottata like* this : '... It is also called *Dottata* because it is being played till daybreak.'(Janangada Jeevala, p.118) But in villages, not only Dottatas, but Sannatas also are played till morning. Today's dramas also are not allowed to stop, in villages, till daybreak. Therefore this opinion does not stand good.
2. Dr. M.S. Sunkapura, *Prameela, Introduction*
3. Dr. D.K. Rajendra, *Kabbinahalu,* p.219
4. Dr. K.G. Shasthree, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana Part* I, p.41
5. (a) *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.16

(b) This is called Moodalapaya(of the East), placing it against the form of West Coast. Adya Rangacharya, Bharatheeya Rangabhoomi, p.98

6. Kannada Bayalata, Ka.Sa. *Parishath Pathrike,* 42-2, p.50
7. Bhimarao Chitaguppi, *Samshodhana Panchdashi,* p.237
8. Somashekhara Imrapura, *Hanumantha Lingadharane, Introduction*, p.7
9. Dr. Krishnasharma Betageri, *Kannada Janapada Sahithya*, p.3
10. *Yakshagana Sahithya mattu Muddana Mahakavi,* p.105
11. I have seen two Yakshaganas called(1) *Sananda Ganeshwar* (Printed in 1881) (2) *Yakshagana Chandravali Katha* (Printed in 1880) in the collection of Sri Virabhadra Shasthree of Hirebagevadi, Belgaum District. These are the publications of Mysore Book Depot.
12. Sri Sangamesh Saudattimatha (Professor, P.G. Centre, Gulbarga) who has brought this to light, has written an article titled 'The Rare Yakshagana Poet Duradundeesha of Utthara Karnataka' in 'Kala-1 (Rayabhaga). He has written a detailed and elaborate reply to my letter in which I had expressed some of my doubts. I have used the related points here from his letter and his article with gratitude to him. A report about Duradundeesha's Yakshaganas had been published in Samyuktha Karnataka (Hubli) on 27.12. 1977.
13. It is a recent trend now to publish Yakshagana episodes along with the interpretation of the verses. The works that I have observed are 1) *Tharothpatthi* or *Vali Vivaha* by Babu Kudthadka, Mangalore, 1977 2) Sri Krishna Sandhana ed. Dr. M.S. Sunkapur, Ka.Vi.Vi. Dharawada, 1977
14. *Vanashree*, p.36 (U.Ka. Ja. Sa. Sam. Yallapura)
15. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.41
16. *Karnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.199
17. Dr. H.K. Ranganath, *The Karnataka Theatre*, p.69

18. Somashekhara Imrapur has mistaken the prayer to Bheemesha here as the words of praise offered to Bheemesha Kavi. *Janapada Sahitya Darshana, Part 3*, p.48.
19. *Sathyavarma, Manuscript*
20. *Muruvare Vajra, Manuscript*
21. *Lankadahana, Manuscript*
22. *Shivajalandhara, Manuscript*
23. *Devimahathme,* Manuscript
24. *Sambalakshini Kalyani,* Manuscript
25. *Shivajalandhra,* Manuscript
26. *Shathakantha Ravana,* Manuscript
27. *Prameele,* p.19
28. *Prameele,* p.23
29. *Prameele,* p. 11
30. *Prameele,* p.13
31. *Prameele,* p. 15
32. The person who told me this was Sri Narasimha Rao, Teacher in Tagore Memorial Highschool, Raichur.
33. *Prameele,* p. 80
34. *Prameele,* p.64
35. *Prameele,* p. 65
36. *Prameele,* p.7
37. *Prameele,* p. 7
38. *Prameele,* p. 15
39. *Lankadahana,* Manuscript
40. *Prameele,* p. 35
41. *Prameele,* p. 79
42. *Prameele,* p.81
43. *Prameele,* p.53
44. *Prameele,* p. 52
45. *Prameele,* p.49

46. *Prameele,* p. 82
47. *Prameele* p.110
48. *Hosapete,* Manuscript
49. *Srikrishna Parijatha* (Mysore University) Introduction, p. 71
50. *Hosapete,* Manuscript
51. *Raichuru,* Manuscript
52. Printed Copy, (Gadag- 1968) P.3
53. Dr. B. B. Hendi, *Janapada Sahitya Darshana* Part-1, p. 236
54. Dr. M. S. Sunkapur, Part 1, p.155
55. This verse is sung by Manthare to Kaikeyi in *Lankadahana,* (Thigadolli Manuscript)
56. Sulakshine Pada, *Valisugreevara Kathe,* Manuscript
57. Bhimarao Chitaguppi, *Samshodhana Tharanga,* p. 237
58. Dr. M. S. Sunkapur, *Prameele, Introduction,* p. 8
59. Ibid, p.8
60. *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part-I, p. 236
61. Somashekhara Imrapura, *Janapada sahithya Darshana,* Part III, p.50
62. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.41
63. It is wrong to consider this Suthradhara as equal to Saarathi, Kodangi or Hanumanayaka.' In the Doddata of Uttara Karnataka, the one who is called Suthradhara is not Bhagavatha. He is the narrator who is called Kodangi, Sarathi or Hanumanayaka in Dakshina Kannada' Dr. K. Rajendra, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p.143-44
64. *Markandeyana Kathe* (Venkanna of Ramasagara) p.27(Printed copy of 1923)
65. *Prameele,* p.83
66. Vidooshaka is the normal hero of an Indian play'- A.B. Keith, *Sanskrit Drama,* p.99
67. Adya Rangacharya, *Bharatheeya Rangabhoomi,* p.99

69. *Shivajalandhara,* (Manuscript)

70. This is the work of Gandigavada Balambhatta, who is the famous Moodalapaya Poet of this part.

71. In the folk drama of Himachala Pradesh *'Kariyala'* the Vidooshaka brings a woman character along with him. Both of them dance together. J.C. Mathur, Dharma in Rural India, p.46

72. *Janapada Sahithya Darshana Part II*, p. 141-42

73. *Prameele.*, p.12

74. *Prameele,* p. 12

75. Dr. Shivarama Karantha, *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.44

76. (In) Dramatic forms known in Indian villages, two stock characters are easily identified. The clown (Vidooshaka) and the narrator-cum- stage manager(Suthradhara). J.C. Mathur, Drama in Rural India, p.4

77. In the autobiography of Sri Veerabhadra Shasthri (1885-1975), who is the poet of *'Lankadahana'* and 'Thripura Samhara' these words are found. Sri Veerabhadra Shasthri's autobiography which is in the unpublished manuscript form is at present kept in his house at Hirebagevadi.

78. *'Theen Khan ka Khel'* which is prevalent in and around Ujjayini, they construct a stage of three floors. In the first floor the Indoor games take place. In the middle floor a dancer called Ramajani dances. The third floor is meant for Gangifa Cards Game. J.C. Mathur, Dharma in Rural India, p.18

79. People say that this is the composition of Singanudi Bhimacharya of Raichur district. Since it is there in the printed copy of *'Markandeyana Kathe'* (1923) written by his senior poet Ramasagara Venkanna, it may be said without doubt that its composer is Ramasagara Venkanna himself.

80. Simpi Linganna, *Janangada Jeevala,* p.119

81. The cassette ' Shanthesha Vittala' is that of Shanthesha Kavi. This song is his composition and it has entered the folk theatre. This information was given to me by Dr. Betageri Krishna Sharma.

82. (1) Sri Shanthaveerappa (Retd Educational Officer, Chithravadigi, Hosapet) says that he has seen with his own eyes the play *'Kumara Rama'* performed by this company in about 1940 at Chtageri.(2) The Bayalata Suthradhara of Hanagal Sri Kareppa says that this company had performed this play once in the past at Hanagal, and then the name of the woman Suthradharini was Narasubai.

83. *'Kannada Bayalata'*, Ka.Sa. Pa. pathrike, 42-2, p. 49-50

DAPPINATA

Introduction:

Dappinata, which is also known as *Sannata* was born and brought to light in the later half of the 19th century. Dappinata is a Bayalata involving songs sung to the tune of an instrument called *Dappu.* A deep thinking is required to realize how meaningful the word is. The *sannata* of the initial stage, performed using the Dappu music was a mere chain of songs. (We may call it a musical drama). The distinct rhythm and tune of these songs go harmoniously with the elegance of Dappu. Dappu is inevitably required to these songs. The accompaniment of other instruments spoils their beauty. Since the character of the song and the character of the instrument are mutually blended together, the word Dappinata incorporates the three things-instrument, song and theatre - and thus gives a broader meaning to it.

Dappinata was called *sannata* during the second stage of its development. That means, after the second decade of 20th century, when the need arose to differentiate Dappinata from Moodalapaya, it was called *sannaata.* Moodalapaya became *doddaata* because of the grand and majestic show it made with its splendid stage setting, costumes and themes. Measured from the same criterion, the simple and easy show of Dappinata on the grand stage looked small, and was called *sannata.* But the word '*sannata*' is in use only in a very few regions. It is unfamiliar in all other regions except in some parts of Belgaum district. In the remaining part of entire North Karnataka, people call it Dappinata only. In Bellary, Gulbarga and Raichur districts it is called *'Dappina Kathe'* (Dappu Story). Though its form has been changed a little bit, the meaning is the same. The Dappinata, which moved from the west to the east, has retained its name in the place where it moved to. After it went across to the east, the new word '*sannaata*' came into use, but it did not go away anywhere, leaving its birth place. Though the word *'sannaata'* became popular, 'Dappinata was not forgotten. Both words are in use. Since Dappinata is more in use than *sannaata,* and since it has got a broader meaning

and a longer tradition, it is the most appropriate name to this particular genre.

Some scholars, who have not understood the correct meaning of 'Dappinata' use the word *sannaata* instead of Dappinata. Have they understood the meaning of *'sannaata'* at least? The tone of the mistaken notion of Doddata has been voiced here also. 'Instead of the long duration of *doddata*, which went on till the sun-rise in the east, the *sannaata r*an only up to 2-3 o'clock in the small hours of morning. Therefore it is Sannaata and its meaning is a 'brief show'. Considering its duration, it is *sannaata*. It comes to an end in the early hours of morning at 3 or 4 a.m. unlike doddata, which runs till morning.[2] M. T. Dhoopadavar, who has given these two statements, has misunderstood the meaning of *sannaata*. In villages, not only Bayalatas but company dramas also are performed till morning. The villagers feel contented only if they fill their eyes with whatever they see till daybreak. Though due to shortage of time the last portions of the episode are wound up in a hurry, the day breaks up by that time. Some people say that *sannaata* is the simplified form of *doddata*. This is also not correct. It is very obvious that both of them belong to two different traditions from the point of view of their themes, performance, music and costumes. So it is not right to say that *sannata* was born out of *doddata*.[4]

The later half of the 19th century was the period that resurrected the folk theatre of North Karnataka. A number of cultural changes took place during that time. New styles and genres took their birth. Dappinata is one among them. To view on the basis of the statements given by the elders of today, the ancientness of Dappinata might not go back more than 1860. It got its own independent form between 1880 and 1900. By 1900 Dappinata had confirmed its position in the theatre as an independent theatrical form. Moodalapaya and Dappinata have come along together thus far. Therefore it is wrong to say that Dappinata was born after Moodalapaya was fully grown up, or that Dappinata is the simplified form of Moodalapaya. Dappinata has been inspired by *Thamasha* of the neighbouring Maharashtra and the *Dasarata* of Karnataka. The people got interested in Dappinata due to the harmonious blending of the inspiration and

influence of both of them. It is not right to say that '*Sannatas*' are the intermittent creation of old Yakshagana, *Dashavathara* play, dolls' play and company dramas.[5] Though the Dappinatas, which came later, were very much close to company dramas, definitely they have not come from Yakshagana, Dashavathara play or dolls' play. When this is very obvious and precise, it is far from truth to say that 'when the execution of characters, went out of control in Doddata, Sannata became more popular.'[6] Moodalapaya or Dappinata never tried to mutually weaken each other for becoming more popular. Of late, both of them are becoming weak themselves. The weakness of one is neither the reason, nor the inspiration for the other.

First Stage - Musical Drama:

The history of Dappinata could be split into two parts. The first stage is from the beginning to the second decade of 20th Century. From there, it is to be considered the second stage. All the Dappinatas of the initial stage were musical dramas. Plays like Radhanata, Sangya-Balya, Roopasena, Station Master are full of songs. The system of those days was such that the *Mummela* man (in the foreground) sang the songs followed by the performer's speech. The speeches were not readymade or prepared, but extempore. Only the songs are the poet's creations. The speeches are made on the spot. In old manuscripts we find only songs and no speeches. The recent manuscript writers have added speeches also, to make it look like a drama.[7] That means, the speeches added today are not their own creations. They are the readymade extempore' speeches, which were passed on from mouth to mouth traditionally from a long time. In the production of these total works, the credit that goes to the poet should equally be shared by the performers who prepared those speeches. These readymade speeches with the properly tamed folk expressions, and idioms, rhythm and grace are in no way inferior in quality to the text written by the poet. Therefore, for the present, the Dappinata producers of this category are two - the poet and the performer.

The Drama of the Second Stage:

It was Kadrolli Neelakantappa who initiated the tradition of writing Dappinatas in the form of dramas, intertwining songs and

speeches in them. The work *'Thiruneelakantha', which* he wrote around 1920, created a new era in the development of Dappinata. A perfect novelty was seen in its theme, the written dialogues and the tune of songs. The play '*Thiruneelakantha'*, which opened a new style, completely giving up the old one, immediately became popular, and thus set a new tradition called *Kadarolli Ata* or *Kadarolli Dharathi*. The poet Shivananda of Hannikeri, who had written and popularized a number of Dappu stories during the fourth decade of the 20th century, trod in the same path of Neelakanthappa, and strengthened the tradition started by him. Because their works contain deliberately written purposeful speeches, they are closer to dramas. These Dappinatas could be successfully presented as musical dramas with a few changes here and there. It is said that *'Nijaguna Shivayogi'* was performed in this way. The influence of the contemporary company dramas is obvious on these two poets, who have brought Dappinata close to the drama form, from its typical musical dramatic mode. 'The Bayalatas, which have provided the revolutionary social imaginations, provide the visions of the social aspects present today in company dramas'[8]. This is only partially true. It is true that the social themes were presented by Dappinatas before they were seen in the company dramas. But, just because of this, it cannot be agreed that the Dappinatas have given rise to the company dramas. The above- mentioned works of the poets are examples. It has been confirmed that Neelakantappa had received inspiration from the company dramas. It is said that at Itagi near Kadrolli, there was a small drama company; they had invited the young Neelakantappa to play the role of a woman character. Its head was a Brahmin gentleman with a fair knowledge of music. He trained Neelakanthappa not only in drama, but also in music. That company did not survive for long. After coming out of it, Neelakanthappa wrote, '*Thiruneelakantha'*, making the fullest use of his experiences in the drama company. Perhaps his purpose was to write a drama on his own. Because he was more strongly fascinated towards the folk audience he might have written a Bayalata.

Long before this Bayalata tradition in the drama form started in this region, the company dramas had become popular here. Some of

the drama companies had made a name developing their own tradition. Neelakanthappa must have been influenced by those dramas. Some of the famous drama companies popular in these regions till Neelakanthappa wrote his works could be enumerated below.

(1) 1869 - Halasige Nataka Mandali.

(2) 1872 - Veerangarajana Prasdita Krithapura
Nataka Mandali, Gadaga

(3) 1880 - Thanthapura Sangeetha Nataka
Mandali, Dharawada

(4) 1904 - Shirahatti Venkobarayara Sri Laxmi
Prasadita Nataka Mandali

(5) 1908 - Konnuru Nataka Mandali,
Bailahongala

(6) 1913 - Vamanarao Mastharara Vishwa
Gunadarsha Nataka Mandali

(7) 1916 - Garuda Sadashivarayara
Sri Dattathreya Nataka Mandali[9]

Neelakanthappa and Shivananda Kavi, though they were greatly influenced by the company dramas, retained individuality in their works, which neither resembled nor were beaten by the company dramas. But of late, when the trouble caused by the company dramas went beyond limit, their Dappinatas lost their original folk flavour, and sped towards dramas. For the present, Dappinatas are becoming the blind imitation of dramas. Sometimes these company dramas themselves have been converted into *Sannatas* by adding a few songs and dances. '*Bhagyalaxmi Mallamma'* is an example'[10].

Classification:

Dr. M. S. Sunkapur has classified the Dappinatas as: 1) *Sharanarata* 2) *Rajanata* 3) *Dasarata* 4) Social, based on their distinctive singing styles.[11] This classification, though it seems to be

correct outwardly, is full of confusion. The tunes of Dappinatas cannot be held under such easy classifications. The tune of '*Thiruneelakantha*', '*Mayi Ata*' etc., which they call *Sharanarata*, does not deserve an independent tradition of its own. Though some new tunes have been added to these shows, the old tunes have not lost their vigour yet. The Bayalatas having social, historical and folk themes, which follow the style of *Sharanarata* have been written afterwards. It looks odd if we call them *Sharanarata*. There are no evidences for *Rajanata* retaining its own tradition based on its tunes. It is not right to call *Rajanata* a tradition, by giving undue importance to it. Though it used to be a show similar in its style to other contemporary plays, it is true that *Dasarata* has influenced Dappinata. But there are no clear evidences to prove that its tunes have been mixed with the tunes of Dappinata. Besides, *Dasarata* is a means of living for the professional artistes. Dappinata is the show performed by the amateur artistes. *Dasarata* did not survive unlike the Dappinatas, which have adopted similar tunes and similar presentation methods. How many Dappinatas are there having their own patterns and presentation methods? Which are they? Therefore it is wrong to consider *Dasarata* as a tradition by itself. In their last shows on social themes, there was a distinctive tune. But old tunes also had been mixed up with it. Only '*Sangya Balya*' has independent tunes. But more than half of the tunes in 'Station *Master*' and '*Roopasena*' are old. On the whole, it is not easy to classify the Dappinata tunes, where the old and the new run along together, the one mixed with the other.

In the meantime, the tragedy that has fallen on the interpretation of *Sharanarata* and *Dasarata* should definitely be mentioned here. There is an opinion that the '*Sannatas*' began to grow with a tight competition among themselves, as though they have come up for the propaganda of the *Shaiva* and *Vaishnava* creeds. The tradition of learning and performing the shows, supporting *Shaiva* creed for one's own pleasure, and the pleasure of the audience, continued for long. But the performers playing *Vaishnava* themes built up their own troupes and made it their profession. Later, their performances became famous as *Dasaratas*.[12] There is no relation between

Dappinata and the religious creeds. We cannot attach the caption of religious creed to these shows, based on the names of its protagonists. The themes that are commonly discussed here like devotion, knowledge, renunciation of family life, salvation etc. have been depicted in a way agreeable to all religions. They do not have any intention of propagandising the principles of any religion or creed. Allama Prabhu has not upheld the superiority of *Veerashaiva* creed anywhere. Otherwise, why did the same poet who wrote about Nijagunashivayogi use the stories of Jodhabai and Kabir Das for the Bayalata? Thus it is clear that these poets never saw their heroes and heroines wearing the coloured glasses of religion and creed.

The very word *'Sharanarata'* is an imaginary creation. This word does not come from the mouths of anyone of any region. It is true that Thiruneelakantha and Allama Prabhu were *Sharanas* and the devotees of Lord Shiva. But it looks very artificial if we call their shows *Sharanarata* just because of their names. In the type of shows that are called *Sharanarata,* there are stories of Sharanas as well as of devotees of Vishnu, and kings and lords. (Jodha Bai and Vishwamithra.) How do we interpret this? Perhaps the word '*Sharanarata*' was born as a relative word to '*Dasarata*'. But this takes us once again in the wrong track. Because, these *Dasas* are not *Haridasas* (servants of Lord Hari) like Purandaradasa or Kanakadasa. They are not *Vaishnavas;* neither are they missionaries of the *Vaishnava* creed. They are of *Devadasi* lineage. They belong to the lower class. Entertaining people through their performance is their occupation. Normally, their plays do not have stories at all. Hence, there is no question of bringing Vishnu's names or the propaganda of *Vaishnava Dharma here*. By wrongly calling them *Haridasas* and by calling them propagandists of *Vaishnava* creed, the mistake has been aggravated. *A*nother mistake is added to the chain of errors, by calling the plays of the shivasharanas *Sharanarata.*

Sharanas belonged to the 12th century. That is why it has been guessed that *Sharanarata* also must have started at the same time. The *Sharanas* of the 12th century used Bayalata as their medium, in order to drive home the ideals and principles of the Sharanas to the mass and spread the principles of their religion. That itself became

popular as *Sharanarata. Sharanarata* was born in the 12th century. It sprouted at the time when Sharanas like Ambigara Choudayya and Kalikamba exhibited the games played by Lord Shiva.'[13] These words cannot be trusted. This proves how the fanciful word '*Sharanarata*' has given rise to disasters.

The Dappinatas are so complex that they cannot be classified easily. If required, we may classify them based on their themes, for the convenience of our study. This may not drive us into any confusion:

1) Pauranika (Legendary) - Anasuya, Bhakta Prabhhalada, Lava-Kusha, Vishwamithra, etc.
2) Aithihasika (Historical) - Sangolli Rayanna, Keladi Chennamma, Dhama Samrajya, etc.
3) Samajika (Social) - Sangya-Balya, Savukaranata, Kattechenna, Roopasena
4) Folk - Basavantha - Balavantha, Dharmadevate, Madagamasoora, Kenchamya, etc.
5) Devotional - Thiruneelakantha, Nijaguna-Shivayogi, Kabiradasa, Thukarama, etc.

Work-Prayer-Preface:

The prayer in Dappinata is not as complicated as that performed in Moodalapaya. In all plays, there is prayer to Ganapathi there is in the beginning. Since the prayer song varies from play to play, any fixed prayer song has not come in the tradition. Some of the prayer songs of Moodalapaya have been well received by the general public. But the prayer songs of Dappinata vary from one play to another, and they are independent. Besides, it is to be noted that they are different in different works of the same poet. In each and every work of Neelakanthappa and Shivananda Kavi, who have composed a number of Dappinatas, there are different and independent prayer songs. Normally, it begins with a prayer to Ganapathi. But in Neelakanthappa's works, it begins with a prayer to Shiva. In the

'*Nijaguna Shivayogi*' of Shivananda Kavi, there is a prayer to Devi after the prayer to Ganapathi. This is not found in other plays. In the other works of the same poet, we find prayer songs only to Ganapathi. If we observe the poet's skill in composing that song, we might not say that it is a part of it. It is as follows:

> I would worship you O Goddess chanting your name
> Protect me and take care of my well being
> You are the essence of Vedanta, you are Omkara,
> You are the heavenly shelter to those who bow to you
> One who protects your devotees, one who destroys
> the demons
> One who gives joy to the sages.

The prayer song to Goddess Sharada in the Moodalapaya of these regions might have stood as inspiration to the composition of this song. The *Ganasthuthi* in the beginning is straight and simple, and normally suggests the poet's name, pen name and the name of his place. But there are instances of the manuscripts moving from place to place, assuming the names of the Gods of that particular place. After the *Ganasthuthi* the story begins straightaway. There are no more prayer songs after that. Depending on the situations and characters here and there, the reference to the favourite God of certain characters may come in between. But there are certain rare instances of adding prayer songs, which are not at all relevant to the development of the story, just for the sake of prayer to create the feeling of devotion. In the *Basavantha-Balavantha* episode,'[15] Basavantha's wife Tharavathi, as soon as she enters the stage, begins her *Shivasthuthi* without noticing her husband standing before her. The sorcerer Siddha of the same story sings two Ramasthuthi songs as soon as he enters the stage as well as before his exit from it. These songs, that are completely irrelevant in the context of the story, look like an appendage.

In the Dappinata of the first stage, in the form of a musical drama, there is an introductory song. In this song, which comes after the *Ganasthuthi*, the broad details of the further story are told briefly, addressing the audience directly in an appealing tone. As an example for this, we may see the introductory song of the play '*Kadlimatti Station Master*'.

Listen to us, our story from the beginning
You elders sitting here, we'll tell you
The audience overcrowded here.
Kadlimatti Station Master,
Did mischiefs unaware of
It was a very bad time for him
He was mad after women
Seeing the beauty became lustful
When asked she spat on him saying get out.
He wrathful chopped the child's neck
The precious pearl of Devalapur
A new son was born . . . .

The same type of song in '*Sangya-Balya*' namely *'Please do not make noise O you people gathered here'* has become very popular. But in it, the story elements are not clearly mentioned. Only the 'account of Sangya-Balya' has been suggestively denoted. Such songs are not found in the Dappinatas of the second stage. They might have been dropped because of the strong influence of dramas.

THE ORIGINAL STORY-THE CHANGES:

Dappinatas of the second stage, just as they introduced novelty in the selection of themes, brought about some other changes too. Though they are closer to dramas, they are completely different in their intention. Their main aim is to explain certain philosophical ideas in a simple style, easily comprehensible to the folk audience. Here, the poet has the extra responsibility to see that the philosophy does not become a monotonous sermon. Therefore they have tried to make it look more natural, by making the male and female characters stand facing each other, enlivening their discussion with questions and answers. It is natural that some changes occur in the story at this juncture. Since the discourse between Allama and Maya is found in the original story itself, the poet need not create it newly. But there are no historical evidences to show that such a context was there in the original story of *Nijaguna Shivayogi.* Therefore, there arose the need for a fresh composition. Nijaguna's *Guru* Shambhulinga, in order to test him, appoints him as a slave in the house of the prostitutes, while washing the hair of the blind and old prostitute. She regains her sight at the touch of his hand. For returning this favour, her young

daughter Prameela expresses her readiness to marry Nijaguna. But he does not accept her proposal, neither does she quit him. Well, the argument begins between the two. This gives an opportunity to the poet. Thus the poet adds certain situations, characters and miracles, which are not there in the original story, for achieving his goal. In the story of Akkamahadevi too some miracles have been freshly added. There, Mahadevi does not strip her saree herself. Kaushika pulls it. Mahadevi does not become naked even if thousands of sarees fall heaped on the ground. Losing his temper, Kaushika goes to touch her body. Mahadevi hurls a curse on him that he might be burnt. Kaushika feels the heat of fire on his body and he wriggles in pain. The heap of sarees on which Mahadevi's wrathful eyes fall, gets burnt into ashes. Such miracles have a wonderful effect on the folk audience and win their admiration. These deliberate changes were not seen in the Dappinatas of the initial stage, which did not have any particular objective.

CHARACTERS:

The creation of characters in the Dappinatas of the initial stage was based on the whims and fancies of the simple-minded rural rustics. But the characters of the Dappinatas in the dramatic form that came later, smeared the artificially coloured mask of civilisation. Since in the initial works only songs were there, the words of the characters became extempore' speeches. Because the characters spoke following the songs, they had a good hold on their words. Hence they were genuine folk creations. They represented the folk minds. However, when we look at the Bayalatas which came later, we may observe changes in the civilized society. The influence of the sophisticated society through the dramas, the shallow knowledge got from the study of refined literature, the dry fascination for philosophy- all these filled the minds of these poets, and they were unable to create true folk characters. Their characters on the one hand lost their folk flavour, and on the other did not rise to the high level of quality dramas. They stood between the two, with all their oddities and strangeness of behaviour. Their characters made a show of their pomp by simply delivering pages after pages of speeches in a formal language. They are not bothered whether they are relevant or

irrelevant. In the agglomeration of speeches, they forget the ground where they are standing. Here, *Thiruneelakantha* has not remained the innocent devotee of Lord Shiva hiding his devotion, unlike he is seen in Harihara's *Ragale* (Ragale is a kind of prosody. But here it is Harihara's book). He is a talkative *Kirthanakara* (one who sings devotional songs) constantly singing the dry philosophy to his co-characters. In the beginning, as soon as he enters the stage, he talks at length about family life, *Maya, Gurubhakthi* and salvation. The Bayalatas of the similar type have made it a convention. The major characters, the moment they hear *Doothi*'s name, begin their sermon on whatever philosophy they know and thus exhibit their pride and insolence. Sometimes this sermon goes on, directly addressing the audience. Sathyavathi, Thiruneelakantha's wife, the moment she enters the stage for the first time, begins her harangue on the concept of *Pathivrthadharma* (duty of a faithful wife) saying 'Oho, the sisters and mothers sitting among the audience in this hall, I shall tell you as much as I know how the girls and women should behave'.[17] But the same woman, when Thiruneelakantha comes home at night from the house of the prostitute, aggressively attacks the entire lineage of men like a quarrelsome woman. There is no relation here between the words of the characters and their behaviour. Their principles are not naturally expressed in their attitudes, and thus they remain as principles without being practised. They do not blend harmoniously with the action of the play, and they fail, being drained in the speeches of these talkative characters. Seen from the point of view of their behaviour and attitude, one may realize that they do not have any individuality. The characters have been used as puppets, just to put forth certain teachings and principles before the people.

Another significant aspect that has distorted the forms of characters is the touch of *Haradesi* and *Nagesi* tradition. The influence of this tradition is so strong here as to make us feel that the Dappinatas of the second stage were born particularly for this purpose. The ritual of the *Gee Gee* troupes, which involve themselves in debates and disputes till daybreak, where men and women claim themselves to be superior to each other, is based on their shallow knowledge of legendary stories and distorted philosophies. This is what happens in

the *Haradesi-Nagesi* troupes. It is also called '*Kalgi-thurai*'. This had been very popular during the birth of the Dappinatas of the second stage. The poets who were greatly influenced by this made proper arrangements for the conduct of *Kalgi-thurai* of the bylanes by making those charecters enter the stage and perform their show. They distorted the original form of the characters. Allama, Nijaguni and Thiruneelakantha were made the advocates, arguing on behalf of men in the court of the audience. Countering them, the female characters like Akkamahadevi, Sathyavathi and Prameela worked as lady advocates. In the episode where Allama is the protagonist, the context where he meets Basavanna and Siddarama does not come at all, because the poet does not feel the need for it. The reason is only this. How to conduct a debate about the superiority of man or woman when a man stands facing another man? The discussion between Allama and Maya covers the maximum part of the play. The discourses between Akkamahadevi and Kaushika, Shiva and Parvathi are sufficiently lengthy. It looks very odd that the poet who has added these episodes to the weight of the original plot, does not refer to the most important event of Allama's life, that is his meeting with Basava and Siddarama. In his fanciful whim about the superiority of man or woman, he does not remember Basava and Siddharama. The reason for this is nothing but the influence of *Kalgi-thurai*.

The historical characters of Dappinata represent the common folk. King, Queen or Minister, whoever they are, their speeches, nature and behaviour are like those of the common people. The politeness, refinement, sobriety and knowledge are not seen in the respective characters. Whatever may be the outward look of the character, its internal nature is purely folk. The love, affection, anger, indignation, agony, desire and disappointment of the common folk are prominently seen in them. The same is true in the case of social characters too.

Songs:

The Dappinata songs that became popular due to their tunes, do not follow the rules of prosody. The length of the lines is different. The number of stanzas varies. Usually, the end rhyme is maintained. Sometimes in the songs of the shows of the second stage, the

beginning-rhyme also is seen. When we look at them from the perspective of their literary value, the poetic simplicity and natural presentations of the songs of the initial musical dramas are not found in the songs of the subsequent shows. The former are the natural folk creations, whereas the latter are gimmick compositions having fascination for rhymes and alliterations. There, the elegance and rhythm of the conversations are due to songs; whereas here, the songs have been composed within the frame of formal language.

In '*Sangya-Balya*', in an attempt to prevent Eerya from going out for trade, Gangi says:

> No one is there in this three-storeyed house,
> But for me a woman alone for the whole day
> Not delivered even once my darling, not
> Quenched my thirst. [18]

This is an example for the colloquial language rising to the level of poetry, without any ostentatious adornment. The figurative meaning implied by the line '*Not delivered even once*' is deep and powerful. The beauty of this song that creates an intimate environment is very effective and natural. We will never find these qualities in the songs of the second stage Dappinatas. The depth of sentiments, found in the colloquial expressions used by Gangi, articulated in similes when she tells Sangya to be one with her 'like milk *becoming curd, and like eyes getting sleep*' will never be seen in the formal language of the other Dappinatas. In the songs of these musical dramas, in their movement, form, comparison, depiction and everything, we see a lot of simplicity and unfathomable power too.

> See my sister, that is Gokula, tiger at the entrance
> Amidst us is there.
> Left and right, line of plantain clusters
> All round above are shining ornaments[19]

The description of Gokula in the above lines by the *Doothi* is a beautiful example for this. In the songs of Dappinatas of the second stage, which breathe in an environment filled with formal language, natural beauty is not found. The quantity of poetry in songs is very

small here. *Sathi* Satyavathi shouts at Thiruneelakantha, when he comes home from the house of a prostitute, as follows:

You enjoyed sexual happiness with a harlot
When you got up you were a fool.
A harlot is a beautiful mango to eyes
But she puts mud into your mouth
Where did you learn this wicked habit
Where did your mildness go?
How did darkness engulf the sun of knowledge
Instead of eating sugar are you eating mud?
Where did you catch this disease, my master?[20]

Because it has been called a poet's song, and because it is being sung in a play, we have to consider it a song. Otherwise it does not have any structure or rhythm to call it a verse. All the songs of this poet are more or less like this. But the songs of Shivanada Kavi - who has rectified the weaknesses found in Neelakanthappa, like loose structure and the use of unsuitable words - are beautiful. We may see the pleasant and elegant rhyme and alliteration. Because of the miraculous power of Nijaguna's touch, when the born-blind mother, who was a prostitute, got her eyesight, both the mother and the daughter entreat him:

O *Sharana* with bountiful mercy
We bow at your feet
O Deva with divine influence
Sorry we made you serve us
Forgive us have mercy on us
O merciful, your play only Shiva knows.

Here, though there is a rich use of rhymes, the verse has not lost its balance. The natural movement of the song is not broken. The songs in the form of conversation, are a noticeable feature of the Dappinatas of this class. One such song is:

Prema : Handsome man you are, my master
You are not my servant
Rule me and happily lead your life.

Nijaguni : Beautiful lady what is this
I am your servant
Tell me, what I shall do next?

Prema : You gave eyesight, in return
I shall offer my lips to kiss

Nijaguni : No, no, no kiss,
Get back from here.[22]

With regard to the composition of these songs, the folk ballads have inspired the poets to a great extent. No other poetic genre has influenced their rhythm and elegance of rhyme, as ballads have done. The touch of ballads is very obviously seen in these compositions. When we see some of them, we experience the strong smell of ballads in such a way that we get confused whether these poets have written Bayalata songs or ballads. One or two examples may be given:

(1) She is a young coquette
Comes here glittering
A beauty throwing light around
Wearing a saree with fig flowers neatly pleated
Where are you going you don't know girl
I shall pull you to me and enjoy you
Look, look you, the radiant beauty.[23]

(2) I saw today a beauty with moon-face
Fit to live in Indra's World.
Shall I describe her beauty
Her complexion is the rays of moon
I lost my memory seeing her O minister,
divine gem
Eyes like lotus leaf the darling woman's
Neatly made golden doll
She is Rambha came down on to the earth
Dear darling, I am mad seeing,
No peace of mind without getting,
Listen, O Minister[24]

All these are perfect erotic ballads. They have entered the Bayalatas in the form of songs. Along with the ballads directly entering the Bayalatas like this, it should be noted that they have indirectly influenced the structural image of the songs too.

DASARATA:

The statement that 'The *Dasas* organized a troupe for performing plays, supporting *Vaishnava* creed and they made it their profession'

and these plays were subsequently known as Dasaratas'[25] is not correct. Though the word '*Dasaru*' has meanings like servants and slaves, one should not forget that it has a broader meaning in Kannada region as *'Haridasas'*. However, just by this, we cannot come to the conclusion that they are the performing *Dasas*. There is not at all any relation between them and the performing *Dasas*. There are no evidences to show that Purandaradasa, the other *dasas* or any of the people of their community were performing plays wearing *veshas*. There are no evidences to say that they had developed a tradition of performances like songs. *Dasarata* has come from the people who by their very caste and profession are Dasas."[26] The word '*Dasa*', which is applied to *Haridasas* like Kanaka and others of the tradition, also suggests a different caste. So the word '*Dasa*' suggests caste. Naturally, the plays performed by the people of this caste are '*Dasaratas*'. The people of this caste are widely spread all over in North Karnataka. They are divided into a number of sub-castes too.

1) *Golladasas* (Cowboys): These are the devotees of Krishna. Only men go about from house to house singing, and collecting corns and grains for their daily needs. They give training to people in Bayalatas. The women sell needles, threads, ribbons and pins. These women do not know anything about the songs and performances of their husbands. The people of this class consider themselves great as they earn their living wandering about lanes, taking the assistance of their women.

2) *Goledasaru*: These are also called *Ooradasas*. They wander along different places with their women. The other sub-castes look down upon them. There is the tradition of inviting them and serving them special meals at the time of some pooja - rites in the houses of death, or on returning from a pilgrimage.

3) *Ambigadasaru:* They are not nomads. They are settled in one place. Fishing and weaving baskets are their occupations.

4) *Puttadasaru:* They are also called *Upparas*. Cutting stones for building construction is their occupation.

5) *Ramadasaru*: Though these people also do the work of cutting

stones, they are not *upparas*. They are the *Gurus (*masters) of *Upparas* and Shepherds.

6) *Kabberadasaru*: Role playing is their occupation. The custom of leaving a woman as *'Basavi'* (similar to the devadasis) is found among them. They wander from place to place performing plays with the *Basavis* and the members of their families. The plays performed by them are *Dasaratas.*

Besides, there are still more sub-castes among the dasas like *Dandigidasas, Chatthedasas, Bedadasas*, *Dombaradasas,* etc.[27] It is not correct to consider these Dasas as *'Dasyus'* as named by the Aryans.

The Birth of Dasaratas:

Keeping the present form of *Dasarata* before us, it is difficult to find out about its birth. 'It is impossible to answer precisely the questions whether it has come along from its origin in the very same way, or whether its present form is its worn out remnants."[29] The *Dasas* of *Dasaratas* belong to *Devadasi* lineage. In olden days, in temples, the *Devadasis* were appointed for the service of Gods. They used to offer dance services at the stage set before God, at the time of the Pooja. This convention is continued in the Venkateshwara temple at Naragunda even to this day. We have got sufficient records to show how these *Devadasis* and their family members performing God's service were given donations and endowments. But all these are stories of the past. The power of those Kings and lords who patronised *Devadasi* system has subsided. The faith of the people in temples also has come down. This had its effect on the *Devadasis*. They found it difficult to earn their livelihood. Therefore they got into the streets with the men of their family to perform plays. Originally, they are not the ones who have formally studied about dramas and other shows. What they knew was nothing but dancing and singing. The service they gave was relished only by a limited number of audience, who were the prestigious citizens of the society, who used to gather around the temple stage. Perhaps they might not have liked the same, when they were shown at the streets before the common folk. Therefore, the performers brought changes in their shows. giving

up the refined style, they turned to folk style. Naturally, commensurating with the folk taste, songs and dances were added to it, giving rise to *Dasarata*.

Merry-Making Pastime:

Dasarata does not require much setting on the stage. It is usually performed at festivals. On other days it is being shown on a public platform, or before the temple, or at the courtyard of wealthy houses. They have never got an opportunity to be presented on a regular stage. Some five or six *Dasas* perform this, standing in the middle of the crowd. Normally, they belong to one family. There are only three characters in it - *Chimana* (heroine), *Goddibhima* (hero), and Javari (buffoon). The rest of them accompany them with background music. After singing prayer songs to Ganapathi and other deities, two young women in the guise of *Balagopala* appear on the stage and begin to sing: *'Bala has come, O Gopala has come'*. After that is over, they sing other songs along with dancing, and then withdraw. The next scene is *Goddibhima-Chimana* episode. In between, *Javari* peeps in to crack jokes. Sometimes he talks a lot, just to cause disturbance. With the songs and performance of Chimana and Go dibhima, what follows is only this: 'The first meeting between a young man and a young woman, both of them getting attracted to each other, falling in love, begging for love, the woman suffering, and Javari, who had been assisting both of them so far, acting as a mediator to bring about their union.'[31] To show this much they make use of love-ballads, *javali* and other light songs. They compose songs to suit the occasion. But subsequently, importance was given to contemporary dramas and films, and singing and dancing to the tune of the audience's taste became a convention. Therefore the *Dasarata* should be considered a pastime for pleasure. There is no fixed story here. Throughout the night, there are the amorous songs of *Krishnaleela,* the songs of argument between man and woman, jokes and revellery. Sometimes the young and amorous audience also had the craze for joining the performers in the middle. It seems that it is the influence of the '*Thamasha'* of Maharashtra."[32]

This tradition of satisfying the low taste of the audience, which became a part of *Dasarata,* did not come from '*Thamasha*'. It came from something of a similar sort called '*Jalasa*' of Maharashtra. There is difference between *Thamasha* and *Jalasa.* In *Jalasa,* three or four women dance exhibiting some lewd *mudras*. Commensurating with that, there is the background of amorous folk songs or film songs or dramatic songs. Sometimes these women sing the songs suggested by the audience written on a rupee note and say '*Daulath Jaoo*' (Salute) to them. With them there is a prankster cracking cheap jokes to arouse the audience to laughter. The Maharashtians have decided that this is not a play for decent people. There is no doubt that this *Jalasa* has influenced and has led the actresses of *Dasarata* to lure the audience towards them to their lustful movements.

In order to satisfy their indecent tastes, sometimes these young rustics themselves enter the stage and join the *Dasarata* taking place in front of them. They do not need any role for doing so. They simply start their conversation with any female character on the stage. She understands the secret meaning hidden in his words, and does not hesitate to give a straight answer back. One such situation is as follows:

Young Man 1: Eey Eey, our he-buffalo has escaped and not to be seen. Have you seen which way it went?

Young Man 2: (pointing at the women on the stage) Look here, it must have slipped in the alley. There is a young he-buffalo in their house. Your buffalo must have gone after it.

Young Man 1: Eey woman, why have to tied off my buffalo? Leave it.

Woman : Why does your buffalo come to our house?

Young Man: Why means what? It has gone after your young she-buffalo. Why did you let your young she- buffalo in the street? You should tie it inside.

Woman : Hey, get lost. Our young she- buffalo is not an ordinary one. It does never allow he- buffalos, whose shoulders are full of pits due to hard work, to touch it.

Dasarata has not developed its own independent tradition. Since it underwent drastic changes, commensurating with the time, taste and thinking of the audience, its form did not remain positively firm.

The *Dasarata,* which ran with only some tattered pieces of conversations without any fixed story, was not considered as a play by the people of Karnataka. It simply became a pastime for them. That is why there is a saying about it that ' The play of the *Dasas* is not a play, and the meal of *dosas* is not a meal.'[34] But still, the contribution of the *Dasas* to the folk theatre is really wonderful. 'The distinctive quality of *Dasarata* is the entry of women as characters. From the Bayalata point of view, it is a revolution.'[35] The actresses of *Dasarata* subsequently began to freely play the roles in other amateur Bayalatas like Dappinata and Parijatha. This new method of women acting the roles of women is a landmark in the history of Bayalatas. Even today, most of the women earning their livelihood by acting in dramas belong to the *Dasa* community.

Due to the competition among other Bayalatas today, *Dasarata* has become poor. Unlike the systematic Bayalata presentation with songs of good taste, dialogues and attractive themes that became successful in turning the entire folk audience towards them, the *Dasaratas* that had lived for satisfying the needs of some people with a taste of low quality met with failure. At Manvi in Raichur District, some people belonging to the '*Jathigara'* community live. There is no difference between *Dasas* and these people. They perform Dappinatas going about from place to place with their women.

Dasarata and Thamasha:

Our folklore scholars have been telling from a long time *that Dasarata* has given rise to the famous folk genre of Maharashtra called '*Thamasha'*. In the '*Thamasha*' of Maharashtra, Goddibhimanna of *Dasarata* assumed a new name called Galapogi, Chimana became Radha and Javari Sakharama became Thathya.'[37] Thus attempts have been made to find the origin of *Thamasha* in *Dasarata*. But these words are said without making any research work about the birth and growth of *Thamasha, but* simply out of admiration for it. *Thamasha* is an independent art form born in Maharashtra towards the end of the 17th century and reached the peak of its success in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 17th century, the Marathas fought group wars against Aurangajeb for a long time.

The armies used to hide in hilly regions for a number of years. These soldiers, who did not have any contact with the people, felt the need for some entertainment. Then they brought female singers and dancers from the North. After a few years, the people who belonged to a local tribe called *Dombari Kolaata* learnt those songs and dances of the Northerners and later they too joined those troupes. Subsequently, the songs and dances of the Northerners, the regional song composition called *Povada,* the songs, dances and instruments of the *Gondaligas* – all of them merged together to form a new theatrical genre called *Thamasha.* Shahoo (1907), in his autobiography, has referred to the system of giving away charities and endowments to the *Thamasha* artistes. At the time of the reign of Bajirao-I (1720-40), *Thamasha* received a lot of encouragement. It saw a speedy growth. By the end of the 18^{th} century and the beginning of the 19^{th} century *Thamasha* reached the peak of its achievement. The three great poets who composed *Thamashas* - Rama Joshi, Anantha Pandith and Prabhakar - lived during the end of the 19^{th} century.[38] When this is the truth, it is wrong to say that *Thamasha* was born of *Dasarata.* It is impossible to take *Dasarata* back more than 150 years. There are no records to mark the existence of *Dasarata* before that.[39] *Thamasha* had acquired its complete state of perfection so many years before the birth of *Dasarata.* These opinions, said with a sense of pride about *Dasarata*, are far from truth. The major female character in *Dasarata* is called Chimana (heroine). This word has come from Marathi. How can the same Chimana go back to Marathi assuming the name 'Radha'?

RAJANATA:

The scholars have mistaken *Rajanata,* which has disappeared from us today. The first mistake is that *Radhanata* itself has assumed the name of *Rajanata.*[40] They believe that Radha has been transformed as *Raja*. But that is impossible. Another interpretation is stunning. '*Radhanata* is a transformed version of *Dasarata.*' The people who felt happy watching the play were so impressed by the touch of philosophy and the popular music in it that they thought they could enjoy it like a *Raja* (King) did, and gave it a second name called *Rajanata. Rajanata* means a play that could be enjoyed without any disturbance of mind and sitting comfortably like a king.'[41] This

statement is misleading, as well as dangerous. Since there is a fancy that *Radhanata* itself is *Rajanata,* it has been misunderstood that the maker of *Radhanata,* Basaragi Kambaara himself is the maker of *Rajanata* too.'[42]

The second mistaken notion about *Rajanata* is that it is a Bayalata tradition about the stories of kings. There is an opinion that 'the *sannatas* written about kings and lords are called *Rajanatas*.' Bayalatas like *Sathya Harischandra*, *Vikramadithya,* etc. belong to this category.'[43] But no evidences have been found so far to prove that there was the convention of making the stories of kings and lords as *Rajanatas*. Besides, such a tradition is not known among the people. Just like a Dappinata, having the stories of Sharanas is named as *Sharanarata* by applying it to all the Bayalatas of that type, *Rajanata* also has been interpreted wrongly. Besides, opinions have been expressed that *Rajanata* is a variant of *Sharanarata*. 'From the point of view of the tone, speaking style and dance of the Shaiva plays, there is no difference between *Kadrolli Katha* and *Rajanata*. In *Rajanata* they wear gorgeous costumes. In *Rajanata* they wear the costumes that the courtiers wear on special occasions. Only the female character shines like a queen. The rest of the characters simply smear colours on them and wear simple costumes.'[44] This statement, considering only the Dappinatas of the second stage, appears to be wrong. No one has called the plays of this type *Rajanata*, based on their costumes. If this method is continued, one day perhaps we will have to call the play *Nijaguna as* Shivayogi play and the play on *Vishwamithras* as sage's play.

The truth is that *Rajanata* is an independent Dappinata. It was in vogue during the later half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The famous Parijatha artiste Sri Molerama remembers having seen a *Rajanata,* in which his brother had performed a role, when he was a small boy, about 70 years ago. He says that it was very popular in those days, but disappeared all of a sudden. It got its name because it was the story of two kings. Since the contemporary Dappinatas like *Roopasena, Sangya-Balya,* etc. contained social themes, the stories about kings appeared to be distinct and different. They named it as *Rajanata*. Of the two kings, one

was Chithrasena. He had a daughter. The problem of her marriage was the main theme of the story. A piece of its song goes like this:

Come O daughter come to me,
Deer-eyed virtuous beauty.

Earlier, there used to be the *Goulagithi* (like a prologue) part in the beginning of *Radhanata* also. But the one who pulled her to talk was Galapoji. There was no relationship between this *Goulagithi* part and the rest of the story. Subsequently, *Rajanata* disappeared altogether and *Radhanata* became more popular in this region. Therefore *Radhanata* can never be *Rajanata*.

RADHANATA:

Radhanata is the combination of *Dasarata* and *Thamasha* of Maharashtra, which came to light in the later half of the 19^{th} century. Since the elements of *Dasarata* that might have inspired it in the beginning are lost now, at present it is only the Kannada version of the *Thamasha*. The characters, story, mode of presentation on the stage - everything is the imitation of *Thamasha*. Chimana, Galapoji and Sakharama Thathya - all these three characters of Marathi origin have been transformed as Kannada characters in *Radhanata*. We have to admit this adaptation. It appears to be tricky if Goddibhima, the hero of *Dasarata* became Galapoji of *Thamasha*, and came back to Kannada once again through *Radhanata*.'[46] This is only a wild guess from the historical perspective. *Goddi* means the main story teller. Gulp means story and Galopoji is a story teller. If there is a similarity in their meaning, it is coincidence. It has already been discussed that the Marathis, who have developed their *Thamasha* tradition from somewhere, cannot be influenced by *Dasarata*, and there are no evidences to prove it. It is purely imaginary if we say that the *Dasas*, who used to give their shows only in certain limited regions of Karnataka, went to the central part of Maharashtra, to perform their plays there.

The one who composed *Radhanata* belonged to the Basaragi Village of Chikkodi Taluk of Belgaum District. As he belonged to the *Kumbara* (pot makers) community, the play was named as '*Basaragi*

Kumbara's Play.[47] This Kumbara's name has not been known yet. It has been said that his name might have been Babuji. At the end of a recent *Radhanata*, since it is said that -

In the country at Basaragi region
By the temple of Lakshmidevar,
In the poet Babuji

it may be concluded this Babuji himself might have been the writer Basaragi Kumbara of *Radhanata.* In another song, it is said:

Thulasirama Singha vasthadi, brother
Servant Babuji we join our hands..

If we observe it closely, we may understand that this is Babuji's teacher Thulasirama Singha. The present version of *Radhanata* has not remained as the work of a single poet. Through the identity of the names mentioned at the end, we may understand that several poets have contributed their songs.

Pashchapura Pandari, touch his feet
Touching his feet Subbarao composed Thodi

These lines show that a poet called Subbarao has composed the songs for *Radhanata*. It is said that the poets like Narevada Thammanna, and Shamanewadi Appanna also have composed and added their songs.

The people of *Haradesi* tradition did not like the story of *Radhanata*, that ended with the harmonious relationship of man and woman, after Galapoji took Chimana into possession. The same story was altered and Chimana was depicted as an indefeatigably faithful wife. Making her preach philosophy to Galapoji, it was established that woman is superior to man. This new form became popular soon. This was brought to light in the second decade of 20th century by an artiste called Nabi of Thalevadi village of Basavana Bagevadi taluk.[49] It is said that he had at first named it as '*Anubhava Saraleela.*'(the play of the essence of experience).[50] But it became known as *Nabi Play* or '*Thalevadi Play.*' It was said that Nabi was an able actor; and he used to perform the role of Radha beautifully. Hence people

were impressed by his show. He took his troupe all over North Karnataka and made his play popular over there. Even now, people who have seen Nabi's Play exist.

Radhanata prevalent at present is somewhat like this. As soon as the *Ganathuthi* (prayer to Ganapathi) is over, *Gollathi* (a maid selling milk and curds) comes. *Doothi* asks her who she is. *Gollathi* introduces herself and begins to describe the milk and curds she has brought for sale:

> Doothi, I have brought milk and curd
> Milk and curd unadulterated
> Fresh from its making
> Fresh curd unadulterated

She describes all the butter, buttermilk and everything and asks *Doothi* whether she can tell where such stuff can be successfully sold. *Doothi* replies that the right place is Gokula. So, both of them together go to Gokula. There Gopalakrishna stops them and asks tax from them. *Gollathi* tells him that in the next birth she would be Chimana, he would be Galapoji and *Doothi* would be Sakharama Tatya, and then she would surrender to him and pay him the tax. After this she withdraws with *Doothi*. This is the first half.

The story of the later half begins with the friendship between Galapoji and Sakharama Thathya. As Chimana was passing through the lane, Galapoji, who was playing cowries with his friends sitting on a platform, sees her and is fascinated by her. He sends Sakharama Thathya to her to get her consent. But she refuses and rejects him. At last he himself goes to her. Here, there is a lot of haggling. However humbly he begs her, she does not yield. He loses his everything for her sake and becomes a pauper. Still she does not budge. Disappointed, when Galapoji leaves the place and goes far away, she changes and repents for her stubbornness. Then she goes in search of Galapoji. However, by that time, he has given up everything and has become a recluse. Now she apologises and begs him to accept her. But he does not consent immediately. After a lot of argument, dispute and taunting, Galapoji and Chimana accept each other and are united. In the Dappinatas of the first stage (except *Sangya-Balya*) the *Gollathi*

part was common. Krishna pestering the milk-selling *Gollathi* is there in all the plays of those times. But in *Radhanata*, it is not an independent episode of the prologue, but is connected to the further part of the story. This is its special feature. The concept of *Gopika, Doothi* and Gopala taking rebirth, is beautiful and it is the chain connecting it to the main story. This is not there in other Dappinatas.

All the songs here seem to have been composed, keeping their tunes in mind. The songs are written, setting the spoken words to the rhythm. In these songs, beauty and poetic qualities are not seen much. There is more of folk flavour and simplicity in them. As per Galapoji's desire, when Sakharama Thathya goes to Chimana's house to tell her about his wish, he sings like this:

> Sister, is there anyone inside
> I feel afraid to tell you
> My heart's friend Galapanna
> Very handsome his looks
> He has kept his mind on you
> Was going to God praying
> He saw you on the midway
> Collapsed feeling weak and was cut away.

There is a lot of similarity between Sakharama Tatya and Balya of Sangya-Balya here. When his friend was unable to convince and get Chimana for him, Galapoji goes to her himself and begs for her love. Then Chimana sings like this:

> It is not proper to ask
> It is not proper to ask
> I have my mother-in-law and father-in-law, my
> husband an army officer
> We are gold you an iron piece
> River and well far are, I shall bring spring water
> Shamanevadi born Appannakavi says this.

Temper is less in *Radhanata* songs, and laxity is more. The *Radhanata* of today, comprising of the songs composed by different poets, is rather fragile altogether. The quality of the songs has come down and the influence of ballad is more on them. The song sung by Galapoji is like this:

I have seen your conduct is like this -
Coaxing and consoling the cowboys
At last this same ground
Your value has gone high by me
It is mad to hear
Now she herself is a faithful wife
You go about telling before the people
In the region of Basaragi
By the sides of Laxmidevaru and in Babuji Kavi[53]

The first tunes of *Radhanata* have come from *chakkada*(a folk style), *kavvali*(a folk style) and ballads.[54] Today their original tunes are disappearing. The simple and beautiful tunes of these light songs are slowly decreasing, and in their place are coming the tunes of *Sangya-Balya* and Parijatha. After Parijatha developed and became strong, *Radhanata* fell under its influence. To some of the songs of *Radhanata, koach (singing in an extraordinarily high pitch or thaarasapthaka)* is given. This *koach giving system,* which came from Parijatha, does not suit a number of songs. It looks like a patchwork. In *Radhanata* songs, two types could be clearly identified. In one type, there are simple compositions that take Hindusthani tunes. Another type takes completely folk tunes. Usually the first line for the song is sung by the background singers. To some songs, the chorus simply gives the tunes '*Are .... Aa...*' This is the influence of the neighbouring Maharashtra. They do not sing a song of three-four stanzas all at once, but at first sing a stanza and it is followed by a brief speech and then continue.

Dance is not the major aspect of Dappinatas. They are dialogue-centred plays. When *Chalthi* (playing on thabla and harmonium in dhrith or fast movement) is shared in the middle of the song, Chimana comes dancing with gentle steps, from one end of the stage to the other. This dance resembles, to a great extent, the dance of *Jogathis* (somewhat similar to *Devadasis).* Their costumes also do not have a distinct look. The *Gollathi* wears the pallu across just like a *Gopika* (a woman of Gokula). Chimana wears the costumes of a wealthy young lady and Galapoji dresses like a rich young man. Sakharama Thathya wears ordinary clothes.

Originally Chimana was a woman character in *Radhanata*. But today, the name Chimana applies to the professional women artistes acting in this play. This is a Marathi word. In Marathi, Chimana means a humming bird.'[55] This is a pet name of children too. Later it became a name for girl children.'[56] Thus, the heroine of *Radhanata,* which took its birth under the influence of *Thamasha* of Maharashtra, became 'Chimana'. All the girls who played the role of 'Chimana' became Chimanas. Thus the meaning of Chimana became an actress. The same meaning stands now not only in *Radhanata* but the girls who act in all other Dappinatas. It is absurd to say that in *Rajanat*a also the one who plays a woman's role is called Chimana. Chimani is the kerosene lamp seen in village houses. They must have thought that the lamp that lights the house may be the lamp to light the theatre.'[57] The names of some of the famous Chimanas in this profession in the past and at present are: Metagudda Kamalavva, Badekundri Gangavva, Dulgunavadi Yamunavva, Alathagiya Yamunavva, Bhimavva, Seethavva, Shankaravva, Hodeda, Madala, Sharavva, Modaga, Susheela Shivanapoora, Ganga, Navaloagattiya Shanthavva, Seethavva, Lalitha, Kamalavva, etc.

SANGYA-BALYA:

There is a belief among the people that '*Sangya-Balya'* was composed by Patthara Master of Bailavada (Gangi's native place) near Bailahongala. It is known only that the poet was Patthara by caste. No one knows what his real name was. It seems originally his family was from Gadag, and later they came and settled at Bailavada. The poet has mentioned his favourite Gods in his poems:

1) Shapura of Gadag on which men have put their steps Lord Basavanna.
   We go and join our hands to Him in reverence.
2) Shankaramurthy of Shapura, the region of true men,
   May His mercy be on us,
   May His love be there on us.

From this we come to know that Shankara Basavanna of Shapura town of Gadag was the favourite God of the poet. But the poet himself is definitely not from Gadag. The story of this Bayalata is based on the real incident that took place at Bailahongala

(not Bailavada), in the mid-19th Century. There are old people still living around Bailahongala, who have seen Gangi. The poet wrote what he saw with his own eyes. Sangya's murder and Eerya's execution must have had very wide publicity during those days. The poet must have written the story when the news of the incident was very hot. There is another reason for the poet writing this story. People say that the poet also had his eyes on Gangi. He failed in getting her for himself. This is possible too. The native place of Gangi and the poet's place are the same. But he did not get Gangi. She married Eerya and went to join the *Lagale* household at Bailahongala. The poet was disturbed by the feeling of displeasure, discontent and disgrace. When Gangi's life was ruined, he got an opportunity to take revenge on her. So he wrote a story for a Bayalata show. When a fresh incident, that had got so much of publicity, came to the theatre in the form of a play, it became very popular. Eerya's two younger brothers, Irapakshi and Basavantha had been saved from persecution, by joining Christianity. Unable to bear with the insult caused, they registered a case against him in the court. At this, the government banned the show for some years. But even amidst these legal restrictions, the people of Avaradi Village, near Kittur secretly retained and protected it. There is another opinion about the birth of this play: 'We may say that this play has taken its birth from a ballad. According to this ballad, it is a real story which took place on 13th October 1862 at Bailahongala.'[61] But this ballad has not come to light so far. So, nothing can be said about this statement. It may also be possible that some contemporary poet might have composed a ballad based on a popular episode. However, it is difficult to believe that the poet of *Sangya-Balya* wrote his play based on that ballad, because, no difference of opinion could be raised against the fact that he himself had seen the incident, himself. There is the possibility of someone else composing a ballad, being fascinated by the popularity of the play when it received great publicity. The truth has to come to light by the comparative study of the ballad and the play. The poet, though not very much educated, is not illiterate. He is a typical folk poet, who is not at all influenced by refined literature. He is the symbol of the rich folk poetic talent of North Karnataka. We may see all the

elements of the quality of the soil, folk flavour and fragrance, the delicate beauty of rhythm and picturesqueness of its songs in this play.

The Essence of Sangya-Balya Story:

Sangya is a rich youth of Hongala. Balya is a poor youth living in the same village. Both are friends. It is almost 8-10 days that after they have met each other last. They meet one another after an anxious search. Sangya pities Balya on seeing his wretched condition. He brings Balya to a cloth shop for getting him some good clothes, shining turban and bordered dhothi and purchases them for Balya. However, when he puts his hands to his pockets, he finds that they are empty. Suddenly he remembers that he had removed and kept his coat before going to take bath. Therefore he tells the shopkeeper that he would make the payment afterwards. But the shopkeeper does not agree to give away the goods without getting the money. Therefore Sangya tells him that he would go home and bring money and till then Balya would stay there. When the shopkeeper goes inside for some urgent work, Balya tries to run away carrying the bundle of clothes. The shopkeeper catches hold of him and stops him. Balya plays some trick and collapses there pretending to be dead. The shopkeeper feels embarrassed. He calls a passerby and tells him that if he secretly carries Balya's dead body away, he would pay him a hundred rupees. That passerby taps Balya and wakes him up. Before that Sangya, who had gone home to bring money comes back, makes the payment and takes Balya with the bundle of clothes. Then he invites Balya to join him in playing cards. Balya tells him that card game is not good. Then they sit to play dice. Something goes wrong in the game and they were on the verge of a fight. Sangya, who does not want to spoil friendship, eventually yields. Then they go to Maddi Basavanna's Shrine thinking that it is the most suitable place for playing dice.

A man called *Halaba* comes from a place around Bellary searching for Eeranna's house. He finds it with the help of a passerby, and gives Eeranna the letter he had brought. Eerya is another wealthy man of Hongala. Irapakshi and Basavantha are his two younger brothers. Eerya's newly married wife Gangi is very beautiful.

According to the letter, Eerya has to go to Bellary immediately for his pearl business. Gangi is reluctant to send him. She frankly tells him that she cannot bear the pain of separation. She weeps that she will not stay alone in that three-storied house. Eerya consoles her. He calls Sangya's paternal aunt, an old woman called Paramma, from the Upperhouse to stay with Gangi. Then he goes on his business carrying his sickle, axe and bundle of meals.

At that time, *Maddi Basavanna's* festival takes place in the village. Gangi goes to Basavanna's shrine with Paramma, carrying the offerings to the God. Already she is a pretty woman. Added to that, now she is adorned with special ornaments. Her beauty is radiant and dashing. On seeing her beauty, the priest of the temple himself becomes fickleminded. He irritates her by passing mischievous remarks about her and she rebukes him. At that time Sangya and Balya come there. On seeing Gangi, Sangya stands speechless and stunned. He cleverly picks up the chain that slips from her neck without her knowledge. He hides it with himself and standing across Gangi's way, he begs her to bless him with her love. Gangi admonishes him and goes away. But Sangya's mind is rooted and fixed in Gangi. Unable to bear the heat of passion, he sends Balya to her to get her consent for a union. Though Balya denies him in the beginning, for the sake of friendship, goes to Gangi's house under the pretext of giving her chain. Gangi treats him well. Balya puts Sangya's proposal before her and begins to describe how he is wriggling with the pain of love. Gangi gets angry, twists his ears and sends him back after rebuking him. On hearing this, Sangya becomes more stubborn. He thinks of a trick. He knows that his paternal aunt Paramma is, at present, giving company to Gangi. He calls her and luring her with the assurance of giving her money and ornaments, he persuades her to help him possess Gangi. Accordingly Paramma goes to Gangi and begins to praise the virtues of Sangya. But Gangi does not lend her ears to her words. Eventually, Paramma plans another trick. She brings Sangya's turban, keeps it on her bed without her knowledge and then shows it to her. Gangi stands embarrassed on seeing it. 'This turban here shows that you have kept illicit relation with Sangya. I will publish this news before all the people', says Paramma and

blackmails Gangi. Gangi feels afraid of the scandal and consents to Paramma's contract and sends for Sangya to come to her at night.

Gangi-Sangya's love affair continues with great thrill and joy. Eerya, who has gone on trade, while on the mid-way sees a dream in which he tied a *kankana* (a holy band) to Gangi's hand and married her. He comes back home. He hears all the people of the village talking about Gangi's adultery. Eerya comes home burning like fire. When he comes home, he finds the main door closed. He stands there and calls out Gangi loudly. The lovers, lost in love-making, are frightened. Gangi cleverly puts out the lamp and opens the door. When asked why there was darkness inside, she gives an excuse that she could not find the matchbox. Sangya, who is standing behind the door, leaps out the moment Eerya enters. But suddenly his turban touches the door and falls down. Eerya lifts it and looks at it. His doubt is cleared. Gangi tries to defend herself by saying that she is not at fault. Eerya calls his brothers, snatches all her clothes and ornaments on her body and forcibly sends her out to her native house at Bailavada. It is decided that in order to avenge the insult on him, killing Sangya is the only alternative. At first Balya remains silent, remembering his love and indebtedness to Sangya, but eventually agrees, falling a victim to fear, and greed as well.

Then it is *Panchami* (fifth day of the fortnight) day. Sangya is preparing to carry the *Kobri-Kuppusa* (coconut and blouse) to Gangi, as is the custom. Gangi hears about the conspiracy against Sangya. She gets a letter written to him telling him not to come out of his house. But that letter goes to Balya's hands. He tears that letter into shreds, gets another letter written in Gangi's name to come without fail, and gives it to Sangya. Not knowing anything about this perfidy, Sangya goes to Bailawada, taking Balya with him. Outside the village, on the bank of the pond Gangi meets them and begins to weep aloud. Sangya consoles her and returns to Bailahongala, in spite of her entreaties not to go. On the midway they come across a screw-pine shrub. Balya tells Sangya that he would go for urination and come back immediately. As already planned, Balya goes behind the shrub and signals to Eerya, Erapakshi and Basavantha. All of them together pounce upon Sangya and seize him. Though Sangya begs them not to

kill him, promising that he would give them whatever they ask him, they kill him and tear his body into pieces. When he comes back to his self, on seeing the pool of blood, Eerya falls unconscious. After that they go to the police station personally and report that they have committed the murder themselves.

'It is wrong to say that the story of *Sangya-Balya* holds the mirror exactly to what really happened.'[62]Though the poet has composed the work, based on the incident that took place in front of his very eyes, it is not the replica of the original. He has woven it into a beautiful Bayalata, using that incident and giving it an artistic touch. In this creative work, just as we see the poet's poetic talent, his weaknesses do not escape our eyes.

Sangya takes Balya to the cloth shop to purchase clothes for him. They are friends grown up together right from schooldays. Does it mean that Sangya did not know anything about Balya's condition? The poet's purpose in the first scene is to show the depth of love between Sangya-Balya to the audience. For that he refers to Sangya's generosity and broadmindedness, by making him buy clothes for Balya at the cloth shop. The business affair with the shop-keeper here is not on a formal line, but begins with a lot of humorous remarks and jokes. If the poet had followed the original incident exactly, it would have been a serious report. In order to prevent it, the poet who knows the dramatic techniques very well, has added this scene with special interest. In a way this scene does not have any connection with the main story.

Sangya and Balya going to *Maddi Basavanna* Shrine looking for a suitable place to play dice, and Gangi coming to the same place is a coincidence. This is the poet's guesswork. Gangi losing her chain and Sangya himself getting it are episodes taking place for the poet's convenience. Sangya standing across Gangi's way and begging for her love is no doubt a dramatic situation. It is nothing but the poet's imagination. The moment Gangi and Sangya begin to talk, Paramma and Balya, who were behind them till then, disappear somewhere. Why? This is a plan designed by the poet. Though the examples of Gangi's words of advice to Sangya look rather incongruous, they are the distinct features of the Bayalata.

Eerya's dream has come as the technique of development of the story. The poet has concocted the context of the first meeting of Gangi and Sangya in a poetic manner. The songs used in the context, their rhythm, elegance and symbolic similes have got the rich grandeur of dramatic qualities. This central part of the play is an example for the poetic calibre of the poet. But, the question is, when both of them were so deeply involved in love-making without being aware of their surroundings, where were Erapakshi and Basavantha, whom Eerya had appointed to take care of Gangi? Later when Eerya confirms Gangi's adultery and calls them, immediately they appear before him. Why is it so? The poet has kept them away deliberately. His main purpose is to show the passionate and amorous scene between Sangya and Gangi to the audience. From the dramatic perspective it is necessary too. The love affair between Sangya and Gangi has started secretly and when it comes to the stage, it has to be depicted effectively so that it makes an indelible impression on the audience. The poet has done this successfully. When we observe all these elements, we realize that Sangya-Balya Bayalata is not the replica of the original incident, but a supreme theatrical production having the best elements chosen from the original raw material.

We may observe some distinctive qualities in '*Sangya-Balya*' when we compare it with the other contemporary Dappinatas of the first stage. Though *Sangya-Balya* took its birth in an atmosphere where social themes were being presented in a simple way, it is having its own special qualities that make it stand distinct from other Dappinatas. If the other Dappinatas belong to one category, *Sangya-Balya* makes a class of its own. Its style is limited to itself alone. It has not created a tradition, giving rise to more such production. The *Doothi* character does not have an organic relationship with the story of the play; hers is humour for the sake of humour. Sangya-Balya is free from that weakness. Here, the humour created by the cloth shopkeeper and Paramma does not stand separate from the main story and so creates a natural dramatic action. The *Gollathi* part of the prologue that was an inevitable item in the first stage Dappinatas is not found in *Sangya-Balya*. By avoiding the *Gollathi* part, which does not have any relation with the main theme, the poet has

augmented the beauty of the total look of the play. Avoiding the *Doothi* and *Gollathi* parts of the play shows the brilliant dramatic skill of the poet of '*Sangya-Balya'*.

The well-known critic Keerthinatha Kurthukoti's opinion about '*Sangya-Balya'* is worth discussing here: 'It seems this playwright has written the play, simply accepting what tradition has given him. Whatever be the qualities of this play, they have come from tradition only'.[63] What might be the background to the composition of this Bayalata and what had been its tradition - all these have been mentioned already. The poet of '*Sangya-Balya'*, though he has accepted things from tradition, has put forth a new creation, apart from taking things from tradition. The poet's skill lies in successfully combining the tradition with his individual talent. From this point of view, what the poet has given is more than what he has taken from the tradition. Though the theme of the play is novel and contemporary, its style of articulation is old. There is no difference in form between this work and the legendary dance drama 'Krishna-Parijatha'.'[64] This is the opinion of Kurthakoti. What is the relation between *Krishna Parijatha* and '*Sangya-Balya'*? They stand apart in songs, dialogues, dances and presentation methods. *Shreekrishna Parijatha* is a refined composition in a classical style. '*Sangya-Balya'* is a perfect folk composition and folk musical drama. The amorous scenes in Krishna Parijatha are born in an artificial, legendary atmosphere, standing at a distance from the common folk, but the love in '*Sangya Balya'* blossoms in our own soil. Therefore there is no question of comparison between the two. The opinion that 'The poet's purpose in writing a drama like this is not to rectify the defects of the society' is the result of not understanding the Bayalata properly. Of course, the didactic message has not been directly given here. But it has embraced the end of the play like the *'Kantha Samhithi'* (wife's advice for good). Its tone is suggestively (not openly) present at the tragedy of murder coming at the end of the play. The purpose of the poet is to point out the evil effects of the society and create a moral atmosphere. The didactic sense and moral consciousness of life in general, standing at the background of this play, is eye-prickingly brilliant. But it does not stand prominent in the play, making the poet

directly begin a sermon and spoil the whole effect. This establishes the high artistic quality of '*Sangya-Balya*'.[66] The illicit relationship between Gangi and Sangya, Paramma's crookedness and Balya's treachery are the symbols of the feelings rooted in the minds of the folk.'[67] Therefore '*Sangya-Balya*' is purely a folk dance-drama, breathing in the folk air.

The distinctive qualities of dialogues in '*Sangya-Balya*' are not seen in other Dappinatas. The address made at every step of the speech, the monotony at the end and the poetic rythm are the important elements in the dialogues of '*Sangya-Balya*'. An example is given below:

Balya.	Dear friend Sanganna, let us play a game of tip- cat? (tip-cat is a game with sticks)
Sangya.	Dear friend Balanna, do you know who plays that game of tip-cat?
Balya:	Dear friend Sanganna, who plays?
Sangya:	Cow - boys play. Let us not play that game.
Balya.	Then friend Sanganna, let us play the game of ball.
Sangya:	Dear friend Balanna, do you know who plays who plays the game of ball?
Balya:	Friend Sanganna, who plays?
Sangya:	Small school boys play I tell you let us not play that game.'[68]

Gangi's character is the most fascinating one in the play '*Sangya-Balya*'. We may identify two stages in the development of this character. In the first half she is an innocent woman and in the later half she is a mature- minded mistress. The poet has successfully performed his duty of blending the development of these two qualities in her. When her husband sets out for trade, she worries about the pain of separation that she has to suffer. She tries to prevent him from going. 'O my darling, I have not delivered a baby even once/ My breast has not lost its fullness yet.' She expresses her heart's desire and discontent like a child. When Sangya stands across her path and begs for her love, at the fair, she admonishes and advises him. She is bold enough to twist the ears of Balya who acts crookedly. When Sangya meets her again and expresses his desire, Gangi does not step back from her determination and retains her individuality by standing firm as a faithful wife. But her falling a victim to fornication

is a sheer coincidence. It is a pity, she consents to join Sangya against her because of Paramma's crookedness. However, Gangi inviting Sangya for love making at the first union itself, as though he was long known to her, looks a little incongruous. In the bare mind of Gangi, weary of the pain of separation from her husband, it does not take long to install the picture of Sangya firmly. Though in the beginning she gets into adultery, because of the inevitability of situation, and she unhesitatingly becomes one with him, as the heat of love goes high in her, she receives as well as gives pure happiness. When Eerya detects about her adultery and was ready to kick her out, when she tries to defend herself by telling all kinds of lies, there is no wonder if Gangi looks cunning. An innocent woman slipping into a heinous crime and defending herself by acting hypocritically is the skilful depiction of human fall. Gangi, after going to her parents' house, has changed from the corrupt and adulterate state to the pure-hearted Gangi. She has become soft and clean. She tries her best to save Sangya's life when she comes to know about the conspiracy. Here her intentions are tender and pure and not lustful. In the horizon of Kannada Bayalata, Gangi's character is a rare artistic creation shinging forever like a radiant milky way.

Sangya has got some qualities of a tragic hero. In the beginning, he makes fiendship with Balya, not with any selfish intention. It is friendship for the sake of pure friendship. God has given him wealth and he wants his friend also to lead a life of comfort. He sees that Balya does not suffer from any shortage of money. He is so liberal and broadminded that he is ready to protect his friendship by accepting defeat when there arises a dispute between them in the matter of playing dice. Sangya's desire for possessing Gangi is quite natural to a young and wealthy man like him. But Sangya is not a womanizer, desiring to possess any and every woman whom he sees. He loves Gangi very passionately. The more he tries to forget her, the deeper becomes his feeling of attachment for her. Therefore, he plays tricks to make her yield. Still he is constantly being pricked by a guility conscience. Once he tells this before Balya too. When Gangi is kicked out of her house by Eerya and she goes to her parental house, Sangya does not reject her or treats her like a leaf that is thrown away after

eating in it. Just like Gangi, Sangya also has overcome all his passion, and has become a chaste lover. Though they are staying away from each other, their hearts are still one. When Eerya comes to kill him, the picture of the mild-natured Sangya trembling with fear is pitiable. On the whole, Sangya is a good friend, liberal and jovial. He is the victim of circumstances, who meets with tragedy for moving in the path of love, fully knowing that it would destroy someone else's life.

Balya does not deserve Sangya's love and friendship. He is a fraud right from the beginning. He tries to run away with the bundle of clothes from the Marvari's cloth shop. He is treacherous and he helps Sangya's enemies in finding him out. When Eerya lures him by telling him that he would give him land, and threatens him that if he does not open his mouth he would kill him, Balya agrees to help Eerya without any more protest. He prepares to find Sangya for them in order to save his own skin. He could have saved Sangya's life if he had remained firm.

Eerya is a prestigious citizen. This rude-natured man does not understand his young wife's mind. Trade is more important to him than his young wife, he does not behave like a frustrated lover. He is not worried about losing Gangi. His only aim is taking revenge. Though he is proud of Gangi's beauty, he has never loved her from his heart. He could have realized his fault at least when Gangi goes to another man. But Eerya does not have that sensitive mind. The sudden surge of the feeling of revenge only instigates him to kill Sangya.

Apart from these three or four characters, the one who draws our attention is Paramma. She executes her role successfully in bringing Gangi and Sangya together. Then there are Irapakshi and Basavantha. They are Eerya's faithful brothers, who appear before him at his beck and call, and they play an important role in killing Sangya.

Among all the Kannada Bayalatas, '*Sangya-Balya*' is the only one reverberating all over Karnataka. This has crossed North Karnataka, not only to the South and the West Karnataka, but also has spread its feet outside into Maharashtra. While passing from one region to another, it has undergone many changes, and '*Sangya-*

Balya' has become a theme by itself. The people of that region perform it, adding their own composition to it. Though the story is the same, songs are different. In the composition of these songs, the regional elements have come out clearly and obviously.

> Your figure is like Thungabhadra filled to the brim
> Like the chariot of Hampi moving ahead
> Like the bright shining gold
> What kind of a wealthy man is your husband
> Inside the village he is indebted
> I shall give you rupees five hundred.[70]

This is the song Sangya sings before Gangi. As the songs change and new songs are added, new tunes are also added naturally. The method of performance and the way of playing on the Dappu also change from one place to another. Except in some parts of Belgaum, Bijapur and Dharwada districts, and in some other regions, Gangi's role is performed by men. Here, Chimanas have not given their entry. A comparative study of various versions of *Sangya-Balya,* prevalent all over Karnataka, is to be done now. Of late, this is getting more popularity in refined circles too. In Bangalore, Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambar's troupe has received fabulous appreciation. K.V. Subbanna of Heggodu, Sagara, has made it a musical drama and has given publicity to it through an effective presentation. Therefore the entire performance is done through music and dance, its presentation is invariably charming. Thus we can easily say that no other Bayalata has become as famous and popular as *'Sangya-Balya'.*

ROOPASENA:

This is a popular play among the Dappinatas of the first stage. It has got some alternative names like '*Ingalagamvi*' and '*Sipayi Aata*' (soldier's play). It seems it was born in a village called 'Ingalagamvi'. In 8 to 10 places the name Ingalagamvi is used. Since its protagonist is a soldier called Rama Singha, it got the name '*Sipayi Aata'*. Just like the other contemporary plays, this is also a musical drama. The dialogues, following the songs, are extempore. Both social and folk elements are mixed here.

After the *Gollathi* performance, the main story starts. Rama Singha receives an order to report for his job. His wife Jayadevi weeps and begs him not to leave her alone and go. He consoles her and tells her to live comfortably with her son Roopasena, makes all arrangements for her at home and sets out. Roopasena cries that he also would go with his father. Rama Singha tells him to stay with his mother and that he would bring whatever he wants when he comes back. Thus he leaves for Mumbai to join the army.

In the next scene, a prostitute called Kamalakshi appears on the stage in conversation with the *Doothi*. *Doothi* and Kamalakshi sit for grinding grains, singing together. Then, Rama Singha passes by that way. The moment Kamalakshi sees him, she is greatly fascinated by his looks. She sends for him through *Doothi*. Rama Singha refuses and sends her back, saying that he is not a lecher to join any woman other than his wife. Seeing no other way, Kamalakshi goes to him herself. An argument takes place between Rama Singh and Kamalakshi. Man, woman, lust and illusion are the topics of the debate that follows. Somehow at last, Rama Singha accepts Kamalakshi's proposal and comes to her house. Both of them enjoy their time together happily. He forgets his soldier's job and remains in her arms.

Jayavathi receives a notice from the government, which says that soldier Rama Singha has not attended his duty three months. The notice intimates that he should come and join his duty immediately, wherever he is. Jayavathi feels worried. She calls *Doothi* and explains to her about her problem. Both of them discuss for long. Since it was night, *Doothi* sleeps beside Jayavathi. Then Roopasena comes there and mistakes *Doothi* for a man. He thinks that his mother is sleeping with a man. Jayavathi wakes up and clarifies her son's doubt. Roopasena feels sorry for suspecting his mother and sets out for doing penance.

Jayavathi comes to Kamalakshi's house with *Doothi*, searching for her husband. She requests Kamalakshi to relieve her husband. When Kamalakshi denies Jayavathi's request, a quarrel arises between the two- at first verbal, and then a physical assault. Rama Singha

calls his wife aside and assures her that he would come home within two or three days. Kamalakshi overhears it and seethes with jealousy. She stabs and kills Rama Singha that night as he lay down beside her. On the other side, Jayavathi had a bad dream. Getting up, when she comes to Kamalakshi's house, she sees her husband's dead body. Unable to bear the shock, she sacrifices her life there itself. At that time Roopasena arrives there, and on seeing the dead bodies of his mother and father, stands dumb. He prays to Lord Parameshwara and prepares to sacrifice his life. Lord Parameshwara appears before him and brings all the dead back to life.

It is said that this play has been shown for the last 60 to 70 years. A few regional differences are seen in this. In some places, the wife's name is not Jayavathi; and Kamalakshi is not a prostitute, but a housewife. She falls in love with Rama Singha as her own husband is impotent. Rama Singha remembers his wife and son by himself, and sets out to his home. Then Kamalakshi kills him. Thus a few changes have been brought about in their presentation.

The songs of this play are enchanting. One may observe the deep influence of ballad style on them. Some tunes of the songs, which are only slight deviations from the tunes of ballads, are distinctive in this play. Rama Singha, while setting out to report for his job, tells his wife:

Why woman do you worry
Take this key to the money-keeping room
All right you clever woman
You should follow the elder's words
You will suffer if you forget them
I shall come back within eight days.

Kamalakshi tells Rama Singha these words:

You handsome man my eyes are completely on you
I cannot live if I forget you
Wearing the fragrant rose and champak
Let us enjoy the game of love today.

It is surprising that there is a Hindi song in this play.

When Rama Singha goes to join the army, his son Roopasena says:

Baba java java java
Thumhe java java java
Jastha vichara na karo java
Thumhe java java java.

A signature suggesting the name of Ingalagamvi is as follows:

The sepoy has set out trained in battlefield
Crossing Poona proceeding to Mumbai
Standing ready to climb on the black horse
The horse has entered the village
of Ingalagamvi'[70]

THIRUNEELAKANTHA:

The famous play called *Thiruneelakantha*, which started during the second phase of the history of *Dappinata,* is called by two different names like '*Neelakantha's play*' and '*Kadarolli play*'. The poet who wrote this is Neelakanthappa, the father of Kadrolli. Its time of composition is not known exactly. It cannot be agreed that it may be the first half of the 20th century, more or less in 1910,'[71] because it has been confirmed that the poet was born in 1895.'[72] It is impossible that he wrote it at his age of 15. This play had become popular by 1930. When we consider all these points, we have to come to the conclusion that '*Thiruneelakantha*' must have been composed between 1920 and 1925. Therefore it is incorrect to take it back to the time of the King of Kittur Mallasarja.

Though Neelakantha had formal education only up to class 5, the knowledge of life and the refinement of culture that he acquired from his experience and company were great. He had learnt a lot about that art by performing roles in a drama company at the age of 15 itself. Neelakanthappa had close contact with the famous spiritual leaders of those times like Dattavada Baba Maharaj, Adrishyappa of Kadrolli, Chulaki Ajjanavar, etc. Neelakanthappa had been influenced greatly by these great souls. He had learnt a lot about *Vedantha* (philosophy) and had nicely digested it. It is not wrong to say that pressure of knowledge within him forced him to compose this work. All his works having the *Vedanta* at their centre, establish this truth. It is obvious that the poet has an intense desire to impart the knowledge

of devotion, worldly life, illusion, woman and earth, to the folk. The poet brought to light a new creation by using the medium of *Dappinata* so as to serve his purpose; and thus it has given a new dimension to Dappinata and he became the founder of his own tradition. The *Thiruneelakantha* Bayalata created history.

In the folk musical drama, dialogues did not have independent existence. The dialogues were developed on the songs. The purpose of these extempore. dialogues was to narrate the story in a direct and simple manner. There was no logical development in them. Neelakanthappa rectified this defect by providing a fixed space for dialogues in Dappinata. He incorporated in those dialogues all his experience in the drama company and the knowledge of philosophy, which he had earned by listening and reading. Thus the form of the musical drama in Dappinata was changed into dramatic form.

The story of *'Thiruneelakantha'* reminds us of the great Kannada poet Harihara's '*Ragale*'. The changes made by Neelakanthappa are noteworthy. Since its purpose was to please the rustic audience and the poet had certain limited and fixed intentions, these changes have done injustice to the original '*Ragale*' of Harihara'.

Thiruneelakantha, unlike the other Bayalata compositions does not start with a prayer to Ganapathi, but with *Shivasthuthi* (prayer to Lord Shiva). In this, the poet has named the prostitute as *Rambha* (the dancer in Indra's Court). In '*Ragale*' it is said that when Thiruneelakantha passes by the lane, some 'desecrated' water was splashed on him. But here, Rambha spits the betel-nut juice and it falls on him. Unlike the Thiruneelakantha of Harihara, the Thiruneelakantha here does not get lost in his passionate devotion. He stands thinking why it happened so. Rambha gets down, goes to him and apologizes. She does not have any feeling of reverence for Thiruneelakantha. Instead, she fears him. She is afraid that he would curse her. When she invites him, Thiruneelakanta curtly tells her that he would never come to her house, as she is a prostitute. She is not an innocent woman to stand there silently. She explains to him the greatness of the lineage of prostitutes, through the examples of stories from the legends. She reminds him of Mahanande and Veerasangavva,

who invoked Lord Shiva and made him appear before them even though they were prostitutes. After a lot of argument and dispute between them, at last Thiruneelakantha goes to her house.

In Harihara's '*Ragale*' Thiruneelakantha's wife's name is *Muththaide* (a woman having husband). Here she has been named Sathyavathi. As soon as she appears on the stage, she addresses the female audience and briefs them about the duty of a faithful wife. She is not a woman of decent nature (which normally is the common trait of a *Muththaide),* but coquettish. When Thiruneelakantha comes home at night, she gets up, goes to him and like a faithful wife, serves him meal. In the bed room, Thiruneelakantha asks his wife 'kiss me, I shall have sexual union with you and receive happiness this moment'. She tells him he should not touch her. It goes on like this:

Thiruneelakantha : ...aren't you my wife/ Is it proper on your part to keep me away, having no concern for me? When I am so desirous of a union with you, won't you satisfy me? I won't leave you today.

Sathyavathi: What's this? Don't you have any shame? Though you are so grown up, you are mischievous still. But if you come to touch me, the consequences you will have to face, mind it.

Thiruneelakantha: You coquette, are you threatening me? Or are you purposely behaving like this? Stop being petulant and give me sexual satisfaction.

Sathyavathi: I've already put an end to all such pleasure seeking. Don't pester me any more.

Thiruneelakantha: Eey, listen to me. It is not proper to put an end to lust. Don't be naughty. Be ready to satisfy me.

Sathyavathi: Tut, get away you shameless! Stand at a distance and talk to me.

The amorous Thiruneelakantha passionately trying to rape his wife and Sathyavathi looking at him with contempt and denying him altogether, have soiled the original characters. The poet could have

depicted this situation tactfully. But he does not have that patience. In the meantime, once Sathyavathi tells that she has lost her interest in this worldly life and just like Akkamahadevi (the most significant mystic poetess of Kannada), she would like to gain the happiness of salvation by renouncing the mundane pleasure. She has a verbal fight with her husband, and she admonishes him by calling not only him a rascal, but Lord Shiva also, in whom he has great faith. Thus Sathyavathi's character is a bundle of contradictions. Will Thiruneelakantha keep mum if his Lord Shiva is called a rascal? He defends his Shiva's power. The quarrel between the two reaches Shiva and Parvathi. They get themselves ready to decide who is more powerful between the two. Thiruneelakantha argues on behalf of Shiva's greatness and Sathyavathi argues on behalf of Parvathi, like advocates. When they had enough of it, they start arguing about themselves. Sathyavathi goes inside, warning him that if he touched her, Shiva will never forgive him. The disappointed Thiruneelakantha feels dejected, leaves home and sets out to go away, but stays back on hearing the consoling words of *Doothi*. Lord Parameshwara appearing in the form of a free recluse, putting them on an ordeal and appearing before them in his true form on seeing their faith - all these further incidents take place as they are in '*Ragale*'.

The poet, who had been influenced by the *Haradesi-Nagesi* tradition, makes Thiruneelakantha and Sathyavathi advocate on behalf of man and woman respectively. Here, though every word is in the tone of preaching, since it is devoid of any artistic touch, becomes a dry blabbering. There is a lot of difference between the messages conveyed by *Sangya-Balya* in the most meaningful tone and in the message passed in an artificial tone here through sheer verbiage. Whereas the moral message hidden in the artistic beauty, is suggestively told in *Sangya-Balya*, here the didactic tone establishes itself in the foreground, making the artistic beauty slip away unseen.

The structural design of songs is very much fragile. The absence of poetic quality is prominent. The rhythm and rhymes are very much hotch-potch. For example, we may see Sathyavathi's song:

Why my husband hasn't come yet
Is the cause of my worry
It is already very late
Just two minutes past he had his meals happily
Without taking rest he would go again
To preach his disciples the philosophy
In the company of *Sharanas*
Why is he delaying without learning
The reasons entire how strange it is
Listen to me you, I tell you the truth
What is the reason for coming here?

These compositions are very much formal and look very artificial. There are very few folk elements seen here. However, in spite of all these drawbacks, it is surprising that this Bayalata has gained so much popularity and has established its own tradition. Perhaps the speeches filled with spirituality, the feeling of respect for the protagonist, the novelty of tunes, novel methods of presentation moving towards drama form - all these elements may be the reason for it. This same poet has written about twenty more such Bayalatas. Though all of them have been brought to stage here and there, none of them has received the popularity and publicity that *Thiruneelakantha* has might be. The reason that, subsequently, people might not have relished, the other Bayalatas, which are the repetitions of the same preaching.

Allama Prabhu:

The one who continued the tradition started by Neelakanthappa and moulded it into a proper shape was Shivananda Kavi. He was a private school teacher in Hannikeri village, near Sampagamvi of Bailahongala Taluk. He wrote a number of Bayalatas following the model of *Thiruneelakantha* and gave publicity to them. Among all the Bayalatas that he wrote, *Allama Prabhu* (the poet has called it Allama Prabhu Vijaya) and *Nijagunashivayogi* have received great popularity. The purpose of this poet is also preaching, talking *Vedantha* and the dispute about the superiority of man over woman. Since he composed his works, keeping these same purposes in view, the weak

points of *Thiruneelakantha* appear in them also. Still, this poet has achieved better restrain than Neelakantha and has shown perfect dramaticity. He has facilitated the articulation of the traits of characters.

The source of the Bayalata '*Allama Prabhu*', which is popularly known as '*Mayee Ata*', is Chamarasa poet's '*Prabhulinga Leele*'. The poet has changed the original story here and there. The story here begins with the entry of Narada. As is common with the *sannatas* of this class, he talks at length to the audience, preaches them *Vedantha* and comes to the court of Lord Shiva. The context of the court here reminds us of *Prabhulinga Leela*. The further story gets a drive through a question asked by Parvathi to Lord Parameshwara. But here it is not so. The seed is sown to the story by Narada's explanation. Narada submits a report of the events of Bhooloka (Earth) to Lord Shiva, and incidentally opens the topic of Allama. He says that if there is righteousness in Bhooloka, it is because of Allama only. Not stopping at that, he begins to talk about Allama as the one who has subdued Maya, etc. Parvathi does not stand this. She condemns him saying that winning over Maya is quite impossible. Not heeding his entreaties, she says she would send Maya, who is her lower-self, to *Bhooloka* to get Allama packed and tied, and brought before her. On this, Parameshwara intervenes, and begins to defend Allama. Well, now the argument starts between Parvathi and Parameshwara. They measure themselves through the criteria of the legendary stories and reject each other. The poet's purpose is also the argument between man and woman. The arguments between Parvathi and Parameshwara are symbolic. Unlike in '*Prabhulingaleela*' Maya does not see Allama for the first time in Madhukeshwara temple. Maya here knows why she has appeared before him. That is why, bearing in mind that Allama is in Madhukeshwara temple, she dismisses the maid, and goes there herself. Here once again the argument about the superiority of man and woman begins. This situation with extensive details could be called the main part of the Bayalata. After the lengthy argument is over, when Maya goes to hug Allama, he disappears from there.

The next story is that of Akkamahadevi. Here, Akkamahadevi is called Sathwike (a woman of mild and pleasant nature). Unlike in the original story, Kaushika comes for testing Sathwike. Here also, an argument takes place between Sathwike and Kaushika. When Kaushika advances to pull her saree, he faints and collapses there. On regaining consciousness he gets a feeling of renunciation. This is an important change from the dramatic point of view. Sathwike advises Kaushika and moves forward.

Here the poet has created a new episode. For the purpose of testing Sathwike again, Allama comes to her in the form of a sceptic and gets into an argument with her. Admiring her renunciation, devotion, and faith, he uplifts her by showing his real form. This situation is also filled with a lenghty dialogue. Sathwike defends her views by quoting abundantly from the *Sharanas*.

The important elements like Allama visiting Kalyana, giving darshana (divine appearance) to Basava and Siddharama, and preaching them, etc., are not there in this Bayalata. Only once, Allama tells before *Doothi* that he would go to meet Basavanna. Why are these episodes not dealt with like other episodes? The reason is that the poet's main intention is to make man and woman stand face to face and conduct an argument. If a man stands against man and argues, how can it be interesting? This shows how strongly this *Haradesi-Nagesi* tradition has influenced the audience. There is a lot of difference between Allama's character as a great teacher of Veerashaiva philosophy and the Allama of this Bayalata who preaches the dry and dull *Vedantha*. The mystic Allama has become verbose, and a preacher of bland sermons here.

From the point of view of the composition of songs, Shivananda Kavi is far better than Neelakanthappa. Though he has used textual language, he has brightened it with rhythm and rhyme.

This point has achieved success in composing simple songs with rhymes fitting to the context. One example for this:

Who will describe the pleasure given by a woman
I shall tell you 'mystically'
Becomes a mother feeds the baby

With sweet milk like elixir
Made it drink completely
You are linga born with her
You recluse brought heaven down
Filter it and see
If woman is not there people will not born
The entire world will be a graveyard, a deserted forest
Learn this, O you virtuous man.

Though the plots of Shivananda Kavi's work like *Nijaguna Shivayogi, Kabirdasa, Jodhabai,* etc. are different, the essential spirit in them is the same. Since a number of works have been composed keeping limited objectives, monotony has peeped into them naturally.

BASAVANTHA-BALAVANTHA:

This is a *Dappinata* consisting of a folk theme It is said that Shivananda Kavi has written a play called *'Baavantha-Balavantha'*. But it has not been found yet. It has not been shown on the stage or has received any publicity so far. That is why it is impossible that this Bayalata of Bellary District is of Shivananda Kavi. But the poet who composed this must be from this side only, because the signature noted by the poet about his place is like this:

Somalapura Somapura
In the bazaar lives Lord Basavanna
I pay my obeisance to him.

From this it becomes clear that the poet belongs to Somalapura, and he is the devotee of Lord Basavanna there. They have been playing this for the last 60 years. Since there is the line '*We put our hands on the Dappu Have mercy on us'*, it is clear that the poet has written this as Dappinata. It seems this is the only Dappinata in this region where Moodalapayas are played more often. Though *Sangya-Balya, Kadlimatti, Station Master* etc. are sufficiently popular here, they are all brought from outside. It seems this work has been composed, based on a folk story.

Mandaraja and Somavathi were a king and a queen. They had a daughter called Poolavathi. Though she was of a marriageable

age, she was not married yet. The reason was that some pearls were required for her wedding. Mandaraja called his minister and ordered him to bring the pearls. The minister went to Basavantha's house and told him about the king's wish and asked him to bring the pearls. Basavantha went to his parents, Kamalaraja and Kamalavathi, to get their blessings. At the same time, Lord Ishwara, formless, also blesses him. Basavantha comes home and inform his wife Tharavathi about his going to get the pearls. But she insists on his remaining at home with her. He consoles and convinces her, and entrusting the responsibility of looking after his house to his younger brother Balavantha, he goes to bring the pearls. No sooner does her husband leavea home, then Tharavathi invites Balavantha amorously for love making. Balavantha denies her saying that it is immoral, and the sister-in-law is like his mother.

A lot of argument takes place between the two about morality and immorality. Eventually, Balavantha leaves home and goes away. Tharavathi goes to the house of a woman called Mallamma and tells her about her problem. If her wish is fulfilled, she assures Mallamma that she would give her a gold chain. Mallamma tells Tharavathi to stay in her house and goes in search of Balavantha. She meets him, and affectionately invites him home telling him that she has brought a very beautiful (prostitute) woman for him. Balavantha goes with her, and enters the room and in the match-light, realizes that it is his sister-in-law Tharavathi. He repents for coming there. Again an argument takes place between the two, and Balavantha escapes from there. Tharavathi and Mallamma discuss once again and think of a plan. They call the sorcerer Siddappa, give him a thousand rupees to exercise sorcery on Balavantha. The sorcerer gives a charmed *gandagari* thorn and tells him to prick it on Balavatha's forehead. Accordingly, Tharavathi pricks it on him when he was sleeping. At once he becomes a dog. Basavantha, who had gone to bring pearls comes back with pearls. He offers them to Mandaraja, receives prize, and comes home. When he fails to find his brother Balavantha at home, anxiously he asks his wife where he is. She consoles him, very casually saying that he might have gone with some harlot. But, quite surprisingly, Balvantha finds the dog licking his feet continuously. When

he asks her why it is so, she tells him that she had kept that dog for her company, in his absence. After a few days, Basavantha sells that dog to a hunter called Thimmayya Nayaka. By that time thieves had already started troubling the country. Mandaraja makes an announcement that he would give his daughter to the one who catches hold of the thieves for him. Thimmayya Nayaka agrees to catch the thieves. When Thimmanayaka falls asleep, his dog catches the thieves. Thimmanayaka wakes up and entrusts the thieves to the King. But Mandaraja disagrees to give his daughter Poolavathi in marriage to Thimmanayaka. He tells Thimmanayaka that the thieves have been caught by his dog, and therefore he would give his daughter to the dog. So, preparations are made to the marriage. Poolavathi is worried that she has been destined to marry a dog. Marriage is over. Thimmanayaka takes Poolavathi home along with his dog. He leaves them at home and goes for hunting. As Poolavathi runs her fingers affectionately over the dog's head, she finds the thorn pricked there. She plucks the thorn and throws it away. Immediately Balavantha stands before her. She is flabbergasted. Balavantha tells his story to her. As both of them are enjoying their time, Thimmanayaka comes there. He thunders aloud, mistaking that some stranger has come to enjoy Poolavathi's company. A fight takes place between the two, and Thimmanayaka runs away defeated. Poolavathi comes to Mandaraja with Balavantha. Mandaraja begins to abuse his daughter, thinking that she has joined some one else. Poolavathi explains the whole story to him. To make him believe her story, she once again pricks the charmed thorn on Balavantha's forehead. He becomes a dog. She removes it, and he becomes Balavantha again. The King's doubt is cleared. He calls Basavatha, who feels great joy on seeing his brother. On coming to know the truth he orders to kill Tharavathi and Mallamma who are the root cause of all these troubles. Both Balavantha and Mandaraja console him and prevent him from doing it. Basavantha takes his brother home with Poolavathi, and conducts their marriage once again before his father and mother. After that, all of them live happily.

The main episodes of this play resemble the folk story to a large extent.[79]Originally, this was a musical drama and the dialogues have

been added, of late. But for the simple details given in the songs, nothing more is found in these dialogues. This seems to have been greatly influenced by Sangya Balya. The minister tells Basavantha to bring pearls. But Basavantha tells his wife that he is going out on trade. The situation in which he tells her that a letter has come from Mumbai, it is a profitable trade and he should go there without fail reminds us of Eerya's words to Gangi. But this does not fit into the structure of the story. As soon as the husband leaves home, his wife Tharavathi calls her brother-in-law for an amorous affair. But she pretends before her husband that she will suffer in his absence due to the pain of separation. Though father and mother are there, Basavantha entrusts the responsibility of his house to his brother. From the point of view of their purpose, these two stories are different from each other. Though adultery is the main theme, there is difference in their dealings. Gangi originally is faithful to her husband. She gets into adultery, being a victim to the circumstances. Tharavathi of this story is basically lascivious. She desires her brother-in-law sexually and when she was unable to fulfill her desire, she takes revenge with him by wrong and unjust means. In this story there is a dispute and debate between morality and immorality and at last it upholds the greatness of morality. Though the argument between Tharavathi and Balavantha look a little exaggerated, it has become successful in its intention. The motif of sorcery has helped the development of the story. The *sobana* song (wedding song), song of washing the feet etc. at the time of marriage are the songs prevalent in the region. Two Brahmin characters called Enka Bhatta and Gunda Bhatta have been added for humorous effect. The songs sung by them '*Today is Ekadashi* (fasting day)/*We are here eating two dosas*' suggest humour and satire. Though most part of the language is textual, consistency has not been kept. Colloquial language has peeped in between. An attempt to raise the level of colloquial language to textual language has been made here. And, its failure is also seen.

KATTECHENNA:

The people of Haveri town of Dharawada have been playing this for the last 50 years. This is a social musical-drama on a social

theme. It resembles the *Dappinatas* of the first stage in its form and composition. It is not known who the poet is. His signature is '*the master of Dhruvipura Pathresha'*. That is all.

There were two brothers living in a village called Sapadli. The elder one was Gadigeppa and the younger one Chennappa. Once for Panchami festival, Gadigeppa sent his brother to their sister's place Thwanagatti. However, in that village, no one was allowed to ride a bullock except the *Gowda (master)* of the village. So he told Chenna to get down from the bullock's back. But Chenna was so stubborn that he did not get down. It led to a quarrel. Chenna went to his sister's house after swearing and challenging before *Gowda* that he would come to his village on a particular day and loot it. But on that day *Gowda* stood awake vigilant during night with his other villagers. However towards dawn all his companions fell asleep. Immediately Chenna flew on the village, looted and destroyed it, and went off plucking *Gowda*'s moustache. The Thwanagatti Gowda wrote a letter to Sapadli Gowda, explaining all these things. Sapadli Gowda summoned Gadigeppa and told him to advise his brother. Chenna got angry, pounced on the Gowd, knocked him down and went up the hill. There he got two friends called Siddha and Huseni. Sapadli Gowda wrote a letter to the Sampagameri Police. The police battalion came and seized Chenna. Chenna beat them down and flew away. Chenna had kept a woman called Lingavva. The police cleverly coaxed her and arrested Chenna in her house As they took him to Belgaum court, on the way, at Unchalageri, they stayed in a lodge. Chenna gave money to the police and sent them to drink wine. As they drank and came, and when they were intoxicated, Chenna escaped from there. The police once again tried their best to arrest Chenna, but in vain. They announced a heavy prize on him. The Gowda of Shivapura tried to catch Chenna. But Chenna kidnaped his daughter-in-law and took revenge on him. At last, they tried to catch hold of Huseni and Siddha in a deceptive manner. But Chenna who was with them managed to escape. Siddha told a lie that he himself was Chenna and went on the gallows on behalf of Chenna. Chenna became a recluse and went away roaming.

The songs of this play are in five to six tunes. The old and new tunes are blended. This is like a model for adopting social themes for Bayalata.

COMIC CHARACTERS - DOOTHI, LALYA:

The importance that the *Sarathi* has got in Moodalapaya, the *Doothi* has in *Dappinata*. Doothi has the responsibility of providing comic relief to the audience remaining on the stage from the beginning to the end of this play. Hers is a distinctive character. It is an important contribution made by Dappinata to theatre. It can be said that *Doothi* is a special feature of Kannada theatre. There is no such character found in Sanskrit plays or the plays of any other language.'[80] This character does not have much costume. A cloth with border is wound around like a saree, that is all. Her work is to introduce the characters, asking cross questions to the characters in order to elicit answers from them and throwing witty jokes in between the talk of two characters. This character is present in all Dappinatas except *Sangya-Balya*. But in *Sangya-Balya*, Paramma's character may be taken as *Doothi*. Though hers is entirely a comic role, whose words are coined on the spot, she too has got some songs. As soon as she enters the stage she sings like this:

> Dada-Bada what is this din and bustle
> Gathered here so many people
> Suddenly got up confused
> Trembling all over in fear
> Untying the saree knot on the waist
> The cap tied on the head
> The cloth around the breast
> All lost due to this

The *Doothi* creates an atmosphere of humour with her song and speech just as she enters the stage. In *Radhanata* she usually begins to talk to *Gollathi* in a song:

> I stood at a distance seeing you and fearing
> O beauty who you are
> Clever and pretty woman
> Tell me what your name is.[82]

After asking this much in song, she continues her words in the form of a speech. The following speech is an example for her poetic calibre.

'Clever clever bead young woman, the best bead born on this earth, you lotus eyed beauty wearing tiny gold ornaments on your ears, you smiling faced woman you make one forget everything on seeing your face, you who have neatly combed your black hair, talk a few words you auspicipus bodied sister.'[83]

The situations reserved exclusively for humour do not come in *Dappinata*. Therefore the *Doothi* has to insert jokes wherever possible, vigilantly looking for an opportunity. Most of the times, her role is limited to arousing laughter, distorting the words and deliberately using wrong words. Narada's conversation with Doothi begins like this.

Narada:	People call me Brahma's son.
Doothi:	Me too
Narada:	What do they call you?
Doothi:	If they call you Baramma's son (=Come you woman), me they call 'Biri biri Hogamma's daughter (Biri biri Hogamma – get away quickly)

In the comic situation, sometimes a background man also joins *Doothi* in conversation. It is very common to stretch the conversation till it crosses the limit of decency. *Gollathi* tells *Doothi* to help her keep down the milk pot on her head.

Gollathi:	Soft, don't break the bottom.
Doothi:	Bottom broken? Who has done it?
Background:	Not broken. Bruised.

In the Dappinatas of the first stage, the speeches of all characters were extempore'. So *Doothi's* speeches also were extempore'. When it came to the second stage, the speeches began to acquire a fixed form. The poet began to write down the speeches as in a drama. Then naturally the speeches of *Doothi* also got into a written form.

The character of Lalya who comes in '*Thiruneelakantha*' and '*Nijaguna Shivayogi'* is also called by names like Lalu and Beesu. Lalya, who is a servant in the protitutes' houses, gains importance as

a comic character. By the time Neelakanthappa and Shivananda Kavi started composing their works, the play *Hemareddi Mallamma* had already become popular. In this drama, Lalya is a servant of a prostitute called Chittharanjani. There is the possibility of these poets taking the same character to their plays. Lalya is there in the other plays also, where the prostitute's character is there. It is true that his mischief, queer movements, the jokes that he cuts interfering in other people's talk, create humour. But it looks like a character forcibly thrust for the sake of humour. Shivananda Kavi, who moved along the tradition founded by Neelakanthappa, has brought more brightness to this character.[86] As soon as he enters the stage, he sings a song about his lineage of eunuchs:

> Black spot is our line, an exception
> Exception are we to Brahma's creation
> Neither man nor woman,
> Not even an immoral woman, eating and loafing
> We are brave men seeing whom people laugh
> Neither mother nor father neither God nor Ghost
> What is our family and what not
> God only knows our mischief.

It is quite natural for Lalya, who spends the whole of his time in prostitutes' houses, to develop wishes and desires just like those prostitutes. On seeing the luxurious life of the prostitutes, he feels sorry why he is not born as a woman:

> If all the people who pass by pour down gold
> I would wear and adorn
> Oh, why was I not born as a woman ?
> If I were a woman like her
> I wear silk clothes
> Anklet on my legs
> Clinking as I walk
> If I were a pretty woman
> Hundred men would be around me
> I would live as I like
> Not caring for others [88]

It is wrong to say that Lalya, who appears only in the episodes related to prostitutes, performs the role of introducing the characters

or doing *Rangapoojas* (stage worship).[89] When you consider the entire play, this character is not very prominent. Then how is it possible for him to introduce the characters as *Saarathi* or *Doothi* does? In Dappinatas no doubt, *Doothi* always performs the work of introducing the character.

MUSIC:

We may clearly identify two styles in Dappinata music. One is the refined style of light music, strictly based on the *ragas*. Another is purely folk style. By the time Dappinatas became popular, the light tunes of Hindusthani music had entered North Karnataka through Maharashtra, and had become quite familiar there. Those tunes gave inspiration to the Dappinata compositions. It is clearly seen that such tunes are based on a particular *Uttaradi raga*. Still the major feature of these classical tunes has been pushed aside, pushing the entertaining element to the foreground. The ballads have influenced the folk tunes to a great extent. New tunes have been formed using the rhythm, elegance and design of the ballads in a variety of ways. In all Dappinatas both these two types of tunes are blended harmoniously. *Sangya-Balya* only has got songs completely in folk style. The Dappinatas of the second stage received some new tunes along with the old ones. Though so much of mixing has been done, we may make a clear cut division between the old and the new, the folk and the refined tunes.

Dr. M. S. Sunkapura has suggested Hindusthani *ragas,* for the songs of the plays edited by him-*Allamaprabhu* and *Thiruneelakantha*. This attempt is misleading. The songs of Dappinata depend only on the light tunes and not on the classical *ragas*. Those tunes may show the touch of those *ragas* suggested by them. Just because of that, it is not right to attach them to those *ragas*. That way, it is possible to forcibly use a *raga* to any kind of song, with some amount of labour on it. It does not look natural, but some forced adjustment. Besides, some of the *ragas* in Hindusthani music are only occasionally sung by singers of one or two *Gharanas*. But attaching the songs of our Dappinata to these is impossible. Of course, one should appreciate Sunkapur's good intention that those

tunes should be recorded so that they might not be forgotten. But simply by mentioning those *ragas* in connection with those songs, it will not be fulfilled. As far as my guessing goes, about 50 tunes are used in Dappinatas. Protecting them is possible only if they are collected in a written form with proper prosodues and suggestions regarding the elegance of the rhythm.

The main instrument used in Dappinatas is *Dappu.* The very fact that its name has been given to this Bayalata tradition tells about the role played by the instrument in it. The elegance of playing on the *Dappu* differs from region to region. It is natural to have developments and changes in the method of playing on *Dappu* just as they happen in the case of tunes. Of late, in many places of Belgaum district, thabla is used instead of *Dappu.* Another instrument used today is harmonium. Earlier, in the beginning, it is said that the sound coming out of the gourd-cup was used for *shruthi* just as they did in Moodalapaya. For the tunes of the second stage Dappinatas, the harmonium music suits very well. In the songs of the plays of this category, *Chalthi (playing on thabla and harmonium in dhrith or fast movement)* comes at the end of each stanza. Then the player on the harmonium gets a chance to play something for entertaining the audience. Only in some regions, violin is used. Rhythms of course, are there, as in the other plays. When *chalthi* is going on, the skilful playing of fast rhythms (dhrith) sounds melodious.

STAGE PERFORMANACE:

The grand stage-setting used for Moodalapaya is not required for Dappinata. The attic (stage) of Dappinata is small in size. At the back, above, a tent is built. Screens are not there. Costumes and makeup also are simple. In the plays based on social themes, the costumes are very simple. If it is a king's character, there need not be any crown on the head. If there is a turban with a *jhari* border, that itself stands for the crown. Silk shirt and *dhothi* are enough. But there are some oddities seen here. Starting from the king to the servant, everybody wears a watch.

Nijaguna does not untie the watch which he wears as a king, even after becoming a recluse. Kings and queens wearing cooling-

glass has become a tradition. Who has to bring the awareness of right and wrong to the villagers whose only intention is entertainment at any cost?

The headman of Dappinata has got other names like *Metthala* and *Mummyala*. There is no difference at all between him and the *Suthradhara* of Moodalapaya. The role performed by *Soothradhara* there, is performed by the *Mummyala* here. Though it looks strange that there is no *Soothradhara* in the *Sannata,* it is the truth. Here the background singers only sing the opening song. It is far from truth to say that the character who enters the stage first performs the *Ranga pooja*, requesting the audience to watch and listen to the story that is going to be performed.'[90]

In the Dappinatas of the eastern districts where there is the dominance of Moodalapaya, some elements of Moodalapaya have been mixed. The *saarathi* of Moodalapaya climbs the Dappinata attic and performs the same things here also. The introduction of the characters takes place here, as it is done in Moodalapaya. But here the words are simple and light. Occasionally as it is done in some Moodalapaya, the conversational part between the *Soothradhara* and *Nati* has been added.[91] There are some queer instances of *Sangyla-Balya* being presented in the Moodalapaya[92]. In this, the *saarathi* is there from the beginning to the end. Irapakshi and Basavanthi dance holding swords. When the *saarathi* asks them who they are, they answer 'Hey, take it that we are the younger brothers of Eera, who is ruling this Hongalapura'. Eerya is adorned with the costumes of a demon in Moodalapaya and he has a shoulder-crown and a crown on the head too. Eerya comes to the stage like a demon, coming out of the green room, dancing with the sound of planks in the light of torches.

Notes

1. *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part III, p.89
2. *Kannada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.234
3. ;...it(Sannata) looks a much simplified edition of Doddata' Dr. H.K. Ranganath, The Karnataka Theatre, p.70

4. Dr. D.K. Rajendra, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part III, p.134
5. Dr. Ra.Ya. Dharawadakar, *Aaru Prabandhagalu,* p.43
6. M. T. Dhoopada, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part III , p.89
7. Here we have to remember that till the beginning of 20th Century, the Jathra of Bengal used to be full of songs, and dialogues were added later. Balawanth Gargi, Folk Theatre of India, p.16
8. Dr. Ra. Ya. Dharawadakar, *Aaru Prabandhagalu,* p.44
9. Dr. Ra. Ya. Dharawadakar, *Aaru Prabandhagalu,* p. 46-53
10. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.37
11. *Janapada Sahithya Darshana Part III,* p.156
12. Dr. M. S. Sunkapur, *Srikrishna Parijatha, Introduction* XII, It seems this is the firm opinion of Dr. Sunkapur. Because he has told the same again and again in other places too. (1) Kannada Rangabhoomi-Andu- Indu, p.11 (2) Janapada Sahithya Darshana, p.130-31 (3) Allamaprabhu, (Introductioni
13. M.T. Dhoopada, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.103
14. *Nijagunashivayogi* (Manuscript)
15. Copy found at Hampapattana.
16. Copy found at Kudachi
17. *Thiruneelekantha,* p.34
18. *Sangya-Balya,* p.20
19. *Roopasena,* Manuscript
20. *Thiruneelakantha,* p.46
21. *Nijagunashivayogi* (Manuscript)
22. *Nijagunashivayogi* (Manuscript)
23. *Roopasena* (Manuscript)
24. *Allamaprabhu,* p.78

25. Dr.M.S.Sunkapura, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part II, p.131
26. Dr. B.B. Hendi, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.97. 26(a) This matter has been collected from a Singer Dasayya of a village called Eramaras near Raichur.
27. Dr. Betageri Krishnasharma, *Kannada Janapada Sahithya*, p.79
28. 'In some Sanskrit Volumes the Dasas have been described as Dasyu. There is a description that the Dravidas, who protested the Aryas themselves are Dasyus.' M.T. Dhoopada, *Kannada Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.217
29. Dr. B.B. Hendi, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.101
30. It is said that the Bayalata prevalent in some villages of Puriya district of Bihar called *'Bidyapath Nach'* is performed on the floor. This place of performance is called ' Leelasthali' J.C. Mathur, Drama in Rural India, p.15
31. Dr. Krishnasharma Betageri, *Kannada Janapada Sahithya,* p.79
32. Dr. B. B. Hendi *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.100
33. Dr. B. B. Hendi, *Janapada sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.101
34. In Gujarath, there is a tribe resembling our Dasas called ' *Tharagala'*. They also do not perform any definite story. Their Bayalata is a chain of different episodes. Sudha Desai Bhavi, p.24
35. Dr. M. B. Kotrashetty, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.118
36. Sri Shantharasa has told me about this.
37. Dr.Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttarakarnatakada Rangabhoomi,* p.35. Some more scholars also are of the same opinion:10Dr. Betageri Krishnasharma, *Kannada Janapada Sahithya,* p.80-81 2; H.K. Ranganath, *The Karnataka Theatre,* p.403; M.T. Dhoopada, *Karnataka Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.224 4; Dr. M.S. Sunkapura, *Srikrishna Parijatha*(Karnataka University) Introduction XIII6; Dr. M.s.

Sunkapura, *Kannada Rangabhoomi*-Andu- Indu, p.117; R.G. Kulakarni, *Srikrishna Parijatha*(Mysore University) Introduction, p.77 .8; Dr. H.K. Ranganath, *Karnatakada Parampare,* Sam.II, p.462

38. Balawanth Gargi, *Folk Theatre of India,* p.73-73. It is noteworthy that in this context this writer has not referred to the Dasarata of Karnataka.

39. One of the thc vain attempts to take the origin of Dasarata to the beginning of Christian era is like this: In the Tamil volume called 'Silappadikaram' written during the beginning of the Christian era, there is the description of a performance which, to a certain extent resembles Dasarata. I think the acion and dance described in 'Sılappadikaram' suggest Dasarata only.' M.T. Dhoopada, Kannada Janapada Rangabhoomi, p.219

40. Dr. H.K. Ranganath, *The Karnataka Theatre*, p.40

41. M.T. Dhoopada, *Karnataka Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.225. The article *'Rajanata'* written by the same author gives the description of Radhanata only. Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p.89-96

42. Dr. Ra.Ya. Dharawadakara, *Aaru Prabandhagalu,* p.43

43. *Kannada Rangabhoomi-Andu-Indu,* p. 11

44. *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part II, p.133

45. I am grateful to Moleram, who told me about this. He lives in Mole village near Inapur of Athani Talluk of Belgaum district.

46. Dr. Krishnasharma Betageri, *Kannada Janapada Sahithya,* p.78

47. Ibid, p.81

48. Sri Rajesaba Muthnala of, living at Kurni village of Hukkeri Talluk of Belagaum district gave me the names of the poets who wrote the above poems. He has made teaching radhanata his profession. Therefore he does not have the manuscript. He tells everything orally.

49. 1) It is said that the second form of this Radhanata was

composed by Sri Krishnaji Kulakarni, living in Madihala village of Alanda Talluk of Kalaburgi District.But this cannot be relied upon. Dr. M.S. Sunkapur, Kannada Nataka Andu-Indu, p.12. 2) It is said that a man called Maula living in Marola village of Hunagunda Thalluk had assisted Nabi in this work of creation.

50. Dr. Betageri Krishnasharma, Kannada Janapada Sahithya, p.82
51. Dr. M. S. Sunkapura has mistaken Radhanata as Ingalagi Ata. (Janapada Sahithay darshana, Part II, p.133) Ingalagi Ata or *'Ingalagaomi Ata'* suggests Roopasena. This Roopasena Ata has been born at Ingalagaomvi.
52. The same episodes are found in some Bayalatas of Andhra. Their Gopalakrishna is called *'Sunkarisikondadu'*. He pesters the Golla woman who comes selling milk by telling her either to pay tax or kiss him. Dr. RVS Sundaram, Kabbinahalu, p.336
53. Rajasaheb, whom I have referred earlier had sung these songs for me.
54. Dr. H. K. Ranganath, *The Karnataka Theatre,* p.41
55. Dr. Krishnasharma Betageri told me this meaning.
56. Chimana is the main woman character in the famous novel *'Gramayana'* by Rao Bahaddur.
57. M.T. Dhoopada, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana* Part III, p.91
58. *Sangya-Balya,* p.4
59. *Sangya-Balya,* p. 104
60. It is wrong to say that ' The story of this drama is based on a factual incident which took place at Bailawada'. Keerthinatha Kurthakoti, Sangya Balya, Introduction, I
61. M.T. Dhoopada, *Karnataka Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.156
62. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Sangya Balya,* MajakooruI
63. *Sangya Balya,* Introduction, p.7
64. Ibid, p.1
65. Ibid, p.1
66. Dr. M. B. Kotrashetty, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part III, p.119

67. Ibid, p.119-120

68. *Sangya Balya Annabeko Nadolaga,* p. 22-23

69. The copy found at Hampapattana (Bellary District)

70. The songs given here have been selected from the Belavadi Manuscript.

71. Dr. M. S. Sunkapur, *Allamaprabhu, Introduction,* p.11

72. Dr. Sunkapur also has agreed with this. Thiruneelakanth, Introduction, p.viii

73. Dr. B.S. Gadgimutt, *Kannada Bayalata,* Ka. Sa. Parishath Patrike, 4202, p.53

74. It is said that Neelakanthappa wrote this work being influenced by the play *'Pundalikana Aata'* of Rayappa Master of Bailawada, which was staged at Hunasikatte Fair. No one knows how that play 'Pundalikana Aata' was. Suppose it were after the model of ' Thiruneelakantha' the credit of starting the new tradition goes to Rayappa Master instead of Neelakanthappa.

75. *Thiruneelakantha,* p.43-44

76. *Thiruneelakantha*, p.36

77. *Allamaprabhu,* p.47

78. The copy found at Hampapattana (Bellary District)

79. Another important example for the folk interpretation of Dappinata version is; *Madagamasura Kenchamma'*. This play, having the theme of the famous *'Kerege Haara'* is popular in the southern part of Dharawada District.

80. Dr. B.S. GadgiMutt, *Kannada Bayalata,* Ka.Sa. *Parishath Patrike*, 42-2, p.52. In *Bhama Kalapa,* there is a *Dootha* character resembling that of Doothi. 'This *Dootha* not only carries messages from one to another, but provides a lot of wisdom and intelligence'. Adya Rangacharya, Bharatheeya Rangabhoomi, p.100

81. *'Harishchandra'* (Manuscript)

82. Told by Rajasaheba Muthnala

83. Told by Rajasaheba Muthnala
84. *Allamaprabhu,* p.3
85. Taken from the performance of Radhanata on 18,4.1978 at Thukkayiwade (Sankeshwar)
86. Basavanagowda of Vakkunda, who had close contact with the poet says that the poet himself used to perform this role in a very touching manner.
87. *Nijaguna Shivayogi* (Manuscript)
88. Ibid
89. Dr. H.K. Ranganath, *The Karnataka Theatre,* p.71
90. Dr. D.K. Rajendra, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p. 144
91. *Basavantha*- Balavantha
92. The performance that I saw in December 1977 at Chithravadigi (Hosapet)

PARIJATHA

An independent genre:

Because of its distinctive method of presentation on the stage, its musical style, its innovative themes and distinct dialogues, Sri Krishna Parijatha has been considered an independent variety of Bayalata. It has developed a distinguished tradition of its own. Therefore it does not look proper to call it a variety of Dappinata (*sannata*), or a part of any other tradition. The statements made by the scholars about Parijatha, without knowing properly about its form and features, are objectionable.

It seems wrong to say 'There are two types of *Dasaratas: 1. Radhanata and 2. Sri Krishna Parijatha*. In what way *Dasarata*, which does not have any definite theme, or independent musical style, or a methodical presentation, and *Sri Krishna Parijatha,* which consists of all these and has developed its own tradition, are related? If *Dasarata* is a pastime with no restrain or discipline, *Sri Krishna Parijatha* is a gorgeous presentation, faced towards a disciplined refined style more than the other Bayalatas. Therefore those two can never be compared.

It is unfair if one says that 'among the popular *Sannata* genre of North Karnataka theatre, Sri Krishna Parijatha is an important composition.'[2] It is true that Parijatha has accepted two elements of Dappinata (*Sannata)* like the *Gollathi* part of the prologue and the *Doothi's* character. But just because of that, it cannot be said that this is a variation of that. When you consider it as a whole, there is a lot of difference between the two. Neither the simple narrative style of the first stage Dappinatas nor the didactic lesson of the second stage Dappinatas is the purpose of Sri Krishna Parijatha. If you observe closely except for the creation of *rasa* (appreciation of art), it does not have any pre-conceived intention in it. The most important element in Sri Krishna Parijatha is its music. Without comprising the element of any of the other Bayalata varieties, Parijatha has moulded its own independent musical style and so, no more proof is needed to

call it an independent style. And, the main feature of Dappinata (*Sannata)* is the use of *Dappu* as an instrument. That *Dappu* has never risen to the attic of Parijatha and will never do in future too. That means the Parijatha tunes will never compromise with *Dappu.* In Dappinata, the man of *mummyala* only sings all the songs. Though the same kind of *mummyala* man is there in Parijatha too (here he is called *Bhagavatha*), he sings only one each song related to prayer and narration of the story. The characters sing their songs themselves, as in a drama. This method is not followed in any of the other Bayalatas. When so many differences are there, it is misleading to compare Parijatha with *Sannata* or say that it is a variety of *Sannata* or call it the King of *Sannatas.*[3]

Calling *Sri Krishna Parijatha* a refined form of Moodalapaya also is misleading as above.[4] The possibility of its originating from *Doddata* or Moodalapaya is still farther than the possibility of its belonging to the category of Dappinata or *Sannata.* In their methods of composition, language of dialogues, style of music, presentation, costumes, etc., Moodalapaya and Parijatha stand on the opposite poles. There is no relation at all between the birth and development of Parijatha and Moodalapaya.

Aparala Thammanna:

Two stages may be clearly identified in the birth and development of Sri Krishna Parijatha, which stands now as an independent theatrical tradition. The first stage is the composition of the scripts in the form of Yakshagana by Aparala Thammanna and the second stage is of its adaptation to the stage by Kulagoda Thammanna.

There is no difference of opinion whatsoever about the composition of *Sri Krishna Parijatha* by Aparala Thammanna. The poet has not mentioned his name anywhere in the work. The authorship of Aparala Thammanna has been proved by the traditional statements and the references made in the manuscript copies. This Thammanna belongs to Aparala Village of Raichur District. The details available at present about his life are only this - he was a Madhwa Brahmin. He belonged to a family of connoisseurs. He had achieved expertise in literature and music. Thammanna composed

Sri Krishna Parijatha. When he presented it on the stage along with his son, it became popular. The people complained about him to the Swamiji of Vyasaraya Mutt. Performing a play like this was not permitted to the devotees of the Mutt traditionally. They excommunicated Thammanna saying that he was a heretic. Thammanna obstinately presented the drama before the Swamiji himself. On seeing the *Krishna Bhakthi* principle of the play, Swamiji was very much pleased and he took Thammanna back to the Mutt. After that, Thammanna went all over the region, showing his play without any hesitation.

The scholars have identified the birth and composition of works of Aparala Thammanna as follows:

Birth - About 1800[6] - about 1815[6]
Composition - about 1800[7] - 1850[8]

About the composition of Sri Krishna Parijatha, Dr. M. M. Kalaburgi has brought to light something new. It has been described at the end of the rare manuscript of *Sri Krishna Parijatha,* how the copying had been made. This Parijatha book has been written in *Shalivahana* year 1729(as per the Indian calendar) for the help of Thalikote Hosamane Basalingappa.'[9] According to the Hindu almanac, it is 1807 A.D. The *Sri Krishna Parijatha* left incomplete by Aparala Thammanna has been made complete by a poet called Sadashivayya (about him details are given next). This *Ubhaya kavi* (dual poet) had copied the script in 1807. Siraguppi Sadashivayya must have taken at least one or two decades to complete Aparala Thammanna's same work. This makes us come to the conclusion that Aparala Thammanna must have composed *Sri Krishna Parijatha* somewhere between 1800 and 1760-70. Naturally, his birth goes back to 1750 or before that. It is also believed that Aparala Thammanna must have written some devotional songs with his pen as 'Gopala'.[10]

SIRAGUPPI SADASHIVAYYA:

There is a rumour prevalent, arousing suspicion about the single authorship of '*Sri Krishna Parijatha*'. It is said that Thammanna committed a mistake, while writing Parijatha. He made Sathyabhama

rebuke Rukmini as an 'old donkey'. That night he had a dream in which Sri Krishna stood before him and said 'Rukmini is the incarnation of Lakshmi. You have committed a heinous sin by making someone call her 'donkey'. Hereafter you do not compose the next work. You are going to die in 9 days'. Accordingly Aparala Thammanna stopped his work in the middle. It is said that his friend Sangayya Swami composed the remaining part. 'The gypsy part of the later half is Sangayya Swami's composition.[11] This rumour has been ignor by some scholars, who, in fact, had great admiration for Aparala Thammanna, and who had not lost their faith in the single-authorship of Parijatha. However, as if to strengthen this rumour, Dr. M. M. Kalaburgi has brought to light another information. The manuscript of *Sri Krishna Parijatha* in Dr. Kalaburgi's collection has given a clear knowledge of the dual authorship of Parijatha. This manuscript begins like this:

> Sriguru viroopakshalingaya namaha/ sriguru nungorala sangameshwaraya namaha/ sri ganadhipathaye namaha/ May the writing work of Parijatha done by Aparala Thammanna of Raichur be blessed with good health, wealth and life.'[12]

Aparala Thammanna's Parijatha begins after this. Most part of it runs smoothly. Further, when the gypsy part begins, when the song addressing Satthyabhama '*dundi nina ganda chandaprachanda'* (Podgy your husband is brave and valorous) comes to end, the instruction given by manuscript writer is as follows:

> 'Sri sri sri sri ithi Aparala Thammanna madida parijatha koravanji sahapadagalu 438 etc. The remaining part begins to be written by Siraguppi Sadashvayya [13]

When this comes to an end, the story once again begins with the song *'Anda maathanu keli nalavinda maaninee/thanda swarnakalashadaduva mandahaasinee..* (listening to the said words, the beautifully smiling woman with love brought the golden water pot). At the end it is written 'the Parijatha written by Aparala Thammanna and the Parijatha written by Siriguppi Sadashivayya - are complete.'[19] Therefore there is no doubt about the authorship of two writers. Dr. M.M. Kalaburgi's printed script is another document to confirm the authorship of the two. The back and front sheets of this have been worn out. As the date is written as 10.6.1929, it could

have been printed more or less in 1920's. The work has been divided as the *Krishna Parijatha* composed by Aparala Thammanna, part 1' (P.1-42) and the *Krishna Parijatha* composed by Sadashivayya Part II (42-91)).

Though Sadashivayya's name is not found, the fact that the composition of *Sri Krishna Parijatha* was completed by another poet has been mentioned in Parijatha itself. Dr. M. M. Kalaburgi has identified this truth, which is unnoticed by the others so far. This is hidden in the last stanzas of *Sobhane* songs in the work. Those stanzas are:

On this earth, in Raichur region
Composed by Blessed Aparala Thammanna
Parijatha Koravanji (gypsy)
Sacrificed to Sri Sathyabhama,
Shobhaane............Shobhaane
On begging to give the clothes given by the in-laws,
On begging for meals,
Not putting off the promise made
This poetry was spread in the region
Shobhaane ..."

Bhimanadasa of Aliyapura
Teaching lessons easy manner
Coming to the glorious Kanakagi
In the right time,
Shobhane...
The Haridasa who worships the auspicous glory
of number without being tired
Rangabhoopala advised time without number
Without being tired,
gave mind to proceed further.
Shobhane
The way in which Parijatha was brought
The story complete by following Bhagavatha's method
Those who happily tell and hear it
Will be blessed with wealth
Shobhane....

The meaning of these songs is as follows: '*Sri Krishna Parijatha*' composed by Aparala Thammanna of Raichur had been stopped at the episode of gypsy coming to Sathyabhama to tell about

future prospects, asking her to give her meals with money. Still, only that much was played in the region and it had become popular. When Bhimadasa of Alliyapura, who had learnt this part of the play by heart, came to the village, Rangabhoopala, who was a devotee of Hari (King of Gujjala Dynasty) told him to continue writing the *Sri Krishna Parijatha*, that had been stopped in the middle. As per the request of the Kings, this work was completed in the *Bhagavatha* method.[17] These two scripts have confirmed Sadashivayya's authorship of the later half. Thereforct here is no doubt that Bhimadasa of Alliyapura in the *Shobhane* song is Sadashivayya himself. It has been found that in the Siraguppi Taluk of Bellary district, there was a village called Allipura - Sadashivayya must definitely be the devotee and servant of 'Bheema' of that place. Nothing more is known about him. But the scholars so far have been telling that the *Shobhane* song is Aparala Thammanna's composition, and that Rangabhoopala is his patron.[18] This is not right. How is it possible that Aparala Thammanna, who wrote only half part of the work, could compose the last *Mangala* song?

THE FORM OF WORK:

It is not correct to say that the *Bhamaakalaapa* dance of *Koochipudi* of Andhra has influenced *Sri Krishna Parijatha*.[19] Whereas Bhamakalapa is a musical drama composed keeping its stage presentation in view, Parijatha is a Yakshagana work composed as poetry. The form and purpose of these two are different. It is incorrect to argue that *Bhamaakalaapa*, where Bhama is heroine, has inspired the Kannada Parijatha in which Satyabhama is the central character. Sufficient evidences are found to confirm that the inspiration to Parijatha came from Kannada tradition itself. The story of Parijatha has not been written by Aparala Thammanna alone. Even before him, starting from Prasanna Venkatadasa, a number of poets had composed stories on the theme of Parijatha in the form of poetry and Yakshagana, and had developed a tradition of it. After Prasanna Venkatadasa, a number of poets had proceeded in that path to compose such work. By that time the *Koravanji* (gypsy) character of Parijatha had already acquired a position in poetry as a technique. A number of works have come up using *Koravanji* as the main part.

The age of Aparala Thammanna (later half of the 18th Century) was the age of a rich crop of Yakshagana works. The interest in *Krishnabhakthi,* and *Shringara* (erotic) rasa were the sources of inspiration for Aparala Thammanna's work. The poet gave vent to his talent through the contemporarily prevalent popular literary genre of Yakshagana.

The story of Aparala Thammanna's Sri Krishna Parijatha runs like this: Dharanidevi (Earth Goddess) goes to the *Ksheerasaagara* (The Ocean of Milk) to see Mahavishnu, in the guise of a cow *(dhenu)* to request him to relieve her from the trouble given to her by the demons, whose weight on her has become unbearable for her. At that time Srihari had been born as Devaki's son, and through a number of his childish pranks, he had killed Kamsa and was living in Dwarake happily with his *Ashtamahishis* (8 queens). One day' Narada came to Sri Krishna and offered him the Parijatha flower he had brought from heaven, telling him that the flower should shine on Rukmini's hair only. Accordingly, Krishna put that flower on Rukmini's hair. But Narada straightaway went to Sathyabhama and slandered before her about this. On hearing that Krishna has put the Parijatha on Rukmini's hair, forgetting her, Sathyabhama was deeply worried. She sent a letter to Krishna immediately through a servant. Krishna sent a reply, consoling her. On seeing it, Bhama's displeasure and pain got intensified. She sent her *doothi* to bring Krishna to her. But the *doothi* came back to her after being insulted by Rukmini. Sathyabhama lost her patience altogether. She went to Rukmini's house herself. Krishna, who had been playing cowries with Rukmini, did not give attention to her. Sathyabhama over filled with sorrow and fainted. Krishna ran to her, embraced and consoled her. But she was not consoled. Both of them had a verbal fight. Sathyabhama came back to her palace, challenging to Krishna that she would worship Goddess Shakthi, and would definitely get him for herself with Shakthi's blessings. Thus she worshipped *Shakthi* with faith and austerity. Shakthi appeared before her and assured her that her Krishna would definitely come to her, to be one with her. Thus with the power and blessings of Shakthi, Krishna's mind changed and was attracted towards Sathyabhama. He came to her in the guise of a *Koravanji*. On seeing the *Koravanji*,

Sathyabhama's mind was moved. She received her with all cordiality. The *Koravanji* told Sathyabhama that her paramour would come to join her that night. Krishna came to Sathyabhama's house after taking permission from Rukmini. Since her anger had not been cooled down yet, she did not open the door. Though he suggestively told her the descriptions of his Dashavathara, it was of no use. At last when he told her directly that Krishna has come, she opened the door. Both of them spent that night happily. Krishna assured Sathyabhama that he would plant a Parijatha tree in front of her house. The next morning Sathyabhama prayed Krishna to explain to her the *nava vidha bhakthi* (nine types of devotion). Krishna did so. At that time Indra came to him and described to him about the troubles given by Narakasura. Krishna went to fight with Narakasura, accompanying Sathyabhama with him, killed Narakasura and relieved the sixteen thousand women imprisoned by him and returned home taking the earrings of Adithi. Then he went to heaven again and gave Adithi her earrings. Adithi treated Krishna and Sathyabhama with great affection. On their way back home, Sathyabhama was fascinated by the Parijatha tree at the *nandanavana* (devine park). To fulfill her desire, Krishna plucked the tree, kept it on his Eagle and resumed his journey. Indra protested this and challenged him for a fight. There was a terrible fight between them. Indra was defeated and he surrendered. Parijatha tree was brought and planted in Sathyabhama's courtyard. However, its flowers began to fall on Rukmini's courtyard. Satyabhama questioned Krishna why it was so. Krishna explained to her that it was because of her ego and she should give it up. Accordingly, Sathyabhama gave up her ego and self-esteem and went to Rukmini's palace. Rukmini received her with the warmth of love. After that Krishna married the sixteen thousand women and with them lived happily.

The central character of this play is not Sri Krishna, but Sathyabhama. Though Krishna is the hero, the greater part of the play is reserved for Sathyabhama's wrath, pain, remorse and devotion. This is a work composed, considering *shringara (*erotic feeling) as its main theme. Before the erotic feelings, devotion has become palid. The poet has made Sathyabhama for the medium of articulating erotic

mood. This is a merit as well as defect of the work. If the merit of the play is depicting beautifully the different faces of love through Sathyabhama, the defect is the paleness of other characters and situations because of focusing more on Sathyabhama. The passionate picture of Sathyabhama is an asymmetric mixture of a variety of feelings and colours. The moment she hears that Krishna has put the Parijatha on Rukmini's hair, Sathyabhama's displeasure gets suddenly flared up. When her *doothi* brings the news that Krishna is not coming to her, her agony goes on rising. This erotic picture has been described elaborately with strong sentiments and enthusiasm. When she goes to Rukmini's house, Sathyabhama's impatience has crossed the limit. The pain of being neglected has gone to the peak with her jealousy for Rukmini. Then she immediately takes it as a challenge, begins to worship Goddess Shakthi and becomes a *thapaswini* (one who very strictly does penance). The erotic situation of her meeting and union with Krishna has come out very beautifully. After spending the whole passionate night with her paramour, as soon as she gets up in the morning, Sathyabhama entreating Krishna to preach her about nine types of devotion looks very odd. Perhaps the poet wanted to stuff the theme of devotion somewhere. So Krishna preaches Sathyabhama. At last when Krishna tells her to give up her ego, Sathyabhama, all of a sudden forgets all the abuses she hurled upon Rukmini and sails to Rukmini's house as if she is innocent. Thus Sathyabhama's character has wriggled with rises and falls. In the episodes related to Sathyabhama, the internal links are not there at all. Instead of moulding Sathyabhama as a delicate wreath, these episodes make her shine like loose flowers. Just like the other characters, she is also a puppet in the poet's hands.

The poet must have planned to write *Sri Krishna Parijatha* as an erotic *Khandakavya* (a fairly long poem based on a single theme). Later he added an introduction and conclusion to it and felt the gratification of telling the complete *Krishnacharitha* (the story of Lord Krishna). Though the poet's intention, as mentioned above, is to depict Sathyabhama's timidity, desire for sexual union and erotic passion, perhaps he had a fear that if he wrote only that much, the readers and the listeners may not appreciate it, and so he designed a

framework for the entire story. And through that he has spoiled the shape of the totality of the work. The story begins with the background of *Krishnavathara* (incarnation of Krishna). As per the entreaty of Dharanidevi, Srihari was born as Sri Krishna. The poet has described the story from Sri Krishna's birth to the beginning of Parijatha story in only five verses. Somewhere in the later part of the play the poet has spent a lot of space for the description of *Doothi's* dress and appearance. Then why has he described this so briefly? For him, such things are not important. He has described all that only for namesake. The later half of the play is entirely an imitation of the story of *Harivamsha*. If we observe the vastness of the story here, it appears that the poet has finished the whole thing in a great hurry. Therefore the concern the poet has towards the erotic description of Sathyabhama is not at all there to depict the first stage of Krishna's life, his killing of Narakasura, his going to heaven, his battle with Indra etc. These things look like a mere patchwork to the main story.

The poet's talent has come out well in the descriptions of *shringara*. Elegance is the prominent feature of this work. It has become a beautiful poetry because of the elaborate and careful description of the feelings, nature and adornment of the characters. It has become a collection of colourful paintings. The poet has the skill to describe and praise Krishna wherever he gets an opportunity. For that, he has the background of the knowledge of *Haribhakthi* literature.

KULAGODA THIMMANNA:

From the above review, we come to know that the Parijatha written by Aparala Thimmanna was originally poetry and not a drama. It can be called a Yakshagana work created in the poetic tradition.[20] It consists of all the features of contemporary Yakshaganas. It is simply a statement of false pride to say that Aparala Thammanna brought it to stay, along with his son. There are no qualities in them that are suitable for a presentation on the stage. Moreover, it will be an audacity to say that during the time of Thammanna (later half of the 20^{th} century) a theatrical tradition of this sort was prevalent in the Raichur region. There are no evidences to say that the Yakshagana literary

works had come to theatre. Therefore it is wrong to say that Aparala Thammanna had staged Parijatha at that time. If he had done it, it should have continued itself as a tradition in that region more than in any other region. But, on the contrary, it has remained unfamiliar in the Raichur region even today. Except for a few interested readers, no one knows Aparala Thammanna's name. The last *shobhane* song makes it clear that *Shri Krishna Parijatha* had been popular as a collection of songs for singing. The glory of Aparala Thammanna's incomplete work spread out everywhere. Allipura Bhimanadasa (Sadashivayya) had learnt it by heart. He sang it before the king of Kanakagiri and was appreciated for it. All these aspects establish the poetic qualities of *Sri Krishna Parijatha*. Had it been a drama, why would they go to make it by heart and sing? In the manuscripts, which were got of late, some had been written for daily recital. The people who had continued the practice of reciting it systematically had been living till recently. There was the custom of the prostitutes singing some selected erotic songs of Parijatha. In the manuscripts of song - collections the prostitutes found at Naragunda, along with other erotic songs, Parijatha songs also were seen. Just because Parijatha was a popular collection of songs, it began to be printed again and again from 1863.

Parijatha of Aparala Thammanna, which had become popular as a collection of songs, was adapted to the stage as a Bayalata and was given publicity by Thammanna of Kulagoda Village, Gokak Taluk of Belgaum district.[22] His time was about 1860.[23] He belonged to Chinivala community. There is a gossip about him. When he was performing Parijatha with his mistress, it is said that she missed the rhythm of her singing. Thammanna lost his temper and flung the chiming cymbal in his hand at her. When it hit her with force, she died on the spot. Thammanna was sent to the gallows. On being asked what his last desire was, he said that he wanted to play Parijatha with his troupe. So it was arranged. The judge also had come and sat before them. When in the middle, they missed a rhythm, the judge shouted and pointed it out. But then he realized that what Thammanna did was not wrong, and hence relieved Thammanna from imprisonment. People say that Thammanna's handwriting is still there

in Gokaka jail. This good-humoured artiste ventured the task of adapting Aparala Thammanna's Parijatha, which was his favourite piece, to the stage. This is the second stage of Parijatha. Perhaps he was inspired to do this by the Marathi theatre. It is said that Thammanna went to Phandarapura with his father and mother. Since they had to undertake this pilgrimage on foot, and the larger part of their path was in Maharashtra, Thammanna got the opportunity to watch a number of Thamasha plays in Marathi. So, after coming back, his memories of watching those plays made him adopt some of them in his Parijatha too.[24] Thammanna, who was influenced by Marathi theatre, added its '*Gaulana*' part to the prologue (Poorvaranga) of his Parijatha. This *Gollathi* part became popular. This entered into other Dappinatas too. Since Parijatha and the first stage Dappinatas were more or less contemporary creations, it is not possible to say for sure whether Dappinatas received *Gollathi* part from Parijatha or Parijatha took it from Dappinatas. Whatever it may be, the *Gollathi* part came from Maharashtra. The Dappinata and Parijatha of those days must have received them with the same feeling.

After receiving *Gollathi* part, the songs should be fitting to it. People say that the composition of the entire songs of the *Gollathi* part in Parijatha is by Thammanna.[25] Though some of these songs might have been composed by Thammanna, it cannot be said that he has written all the songs. He has chosen some of the songs prevalent here and there. Some songs are his poet-friends' compositions. First of all, there are proofs to identify Thammanna's direct lifting of some of these songs of women. The similarity between the *Kolata* (stick dance) songs sung by women found in some village of Maddur Taluk of Mandya district and the *Gollathi* part is astounding.

1. PARIJATHA:

    Wearing Chandragamvi cloth and tying pearl anklets
    Carrying the dark brown cow's milk in a cauldron
    I came along the colony selling milk
    Hearing my voice selling milk Rangayya (Krishna)
    On the upper part of the colony said
    Tomorrow in our house rituals are there
    Gollabhama(Golla woman) you should reserve milk.

Kolata:

Wearing Chandragamvi tying a pearl chain
Wearing beautiful ornaments
Carying the milk - cauldron on the head
She came to the colony.
Hearing the voice of selling milk Ranga
Going to the upper colony said
Tomorrow in our house rituals are there
You reserve some milk for me.

2) Parijatha: Appa leave my pallu Anna leave my pallu
Appayya please leave it
I am not your Appa nor your anna
Your Appa's son-in-law am I a Golla bhama

Kolata :Anna leave my pallu l Thamma leave my Pallu
Annayya leave it please
I am not your anna, nor your Thamma
Your anna's brother-in-law do you know.

3) Parijatha: Father-in-law leave my pallu
brother-in-law leavemy pallu
Father-in-law leave it please
I am not your father-in-law nor your brother-in-law
Your father-in-law's son do you know Golla bhama?

Kolata: Brother-in-law leave my pallu, father-in-law leave my pallu brother-in-law please leave it
I am not your brother-in-law, nor your father-in-law
I am your father-in-law's son, do you know.

4) Parijatha: My child leave my pallu, my father leave my pallu. My child, leave it please.
I am not your child nor your father.
Your child's father am I Golla Bhama

Kolata: My father leave my pallu, my child leave my pallu My child leave it please.
I am not your father nor your child
Your child's father you know.

More than saying that these songs are similar to each other, it is not wrong to say that they are different textual versions of the same song. In the variation of these versions there is a systematic pattern - the displacement of child-father, brother-in-law-father-in-law, do you see, do you know etc. It is wrong to surmise that Kulagoda Thimmanna's Parijatha went to Mandya district and mixed its songs with the folk traditions of that region. Then how did their songs get mixed up with Parijatha? It is only this. These are not pure folk songs. These are the compositions of the literate poets. They belong to the collection of Brahmin women's traditional songs. They came to North Karnataka after becoming a part of the written literature. Or it might have been born here and moved that side. Anyway they belong to the refined literature. Thammanna accepted the popular song unhesitatingly. This is something that is very obvious. Who knows how many of such similar compositions might have become a part of Parijatha like this? The quantity may vary. But no doubt they are there. Many songs Thammanna has taken from others, have been added to Parijatha. Therefore it cannot be said that the *Gollathi* part songs are Thammanna's compositions. Some of the songs that had been popular once and that are heard only here and there, it is said that Kagavada Govindarao composed them for Thammanna.[28] There are people who say that there was a friendship between Govindarao and Thammanna. It is said that the famous ballad poet Balagopala of Belladabagevadi had been the mediator between the two. Frequently, Thammanna and Govindarao used to meet and spend their time together in Balagopala's house. Govindarao Shedabalakara was an extempore' poet, who was a school teacher at Kagavada. He has composed a number of songs, stories and dramas. There is no wonder if he had composed songs for Parijatha out of a friendly obligation. Two songs that are said to be composed by him are as follows:

1) Show me your sweetheart

   - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

   - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

   King Bhimesha
   of Kagevada which is
   Shining brilliantly on this earth.

2) That beautiful Ranga Murthy,
Has he come here Bhama
That he would come to steal
I have searched for him lane by lane
Is he there Swami
Bhimesha of Kagavada.

A poet called Basavantha Paththara of Shamanevadi has composed a song for Parijatha. It is '*To the word of the young woman. . .*' After that many songs have been added and many are forgotten. The people of the respective regions added those songs to their dramas, which they found suitable. The following song of Shoorpali Acharya (Achutha) in Parijatha is famous.[30]

Creeping as fish one who entered water
One who carried the great mountain on his back
One who enters the dense forest in a cruel form
One who shook the cosmos breaking the strong Pillar
One who brought the earth up from the underworld
One who holds the axe and wears Kodanda
Scholar Budha who protected the Pandavas
Sheshashayana who sat on ocean - Bring him
and show him to me.[31]

No one knows whether Thammanna himself chose the song of Purandaradasa, or after him someone else added them. At present all troupes sing Purandarasa's songs '*Sakalgrahabala neene*', '*Yadava nee baa yadukula nandana*' and '*Thoogire Rangana Thoogire Krishnana*'. Some songs describing the traits of Krishna's character, a poet called Baragi Rachayya has composed himself.

If Kulagoda Thammanna is responsible for making the second stage Parijatha a famous Bayalata, Kaujalagi Ningavva also is equally famous for it. The credit of laying a very strong foundation for Parijatha tradition is hers, no doubt. Ningavva, who was in Kulagoda Thammanna's troupe in the beginning, after his death, built a troupe of her own and moved all around North Karnataka. She was born in Kaujalagi around 1857.[32] She had her education in Marathi. It is said that Ningavva knew 5 to 6 languages. She was a good singer and musician herself. It is said that she joined the Parijatha troupe at the age of 12. That means in about 1870 Kulagoda Thammanna had

started his new play and then he must have taken Ningavva to his troupe.

About 1900, Ningavva's Parijatha had become a household talk in North Karnataka. She herself was a very good artiste. Besides, she trained and brought to light famous actors and actresses like Hukkeri Siddharamappa, Badakudri Basappa, Mahalingapura Rajasaheba, Nanadi Gondaligya Shivaguri, Baragi Rachayya, Navalagutti Samvakka, etc. Those who have seen her plays say that she used to make three divisions of her Parijatha - (1) *Gollathi* Rukmini Part (2) Satyabhame's part (3) *Koravanji* part and present them on three days. Ningavva's foster daughter's son Mahadevappa was a famous harmonium artist. His son Sri Ningappa is running the company at present.

THE THEATRE COPY - PERFORMANCE:

The elderly people of today are telling that the Parijatha of Kulagoda Thammanna and Kaujalagi Ningamma, after passing two generations, has undergone a lot of changes now. The Parijatha show of the present could be said to be the creation through the association of many people. Innumerable artistes have contributed to its strong hold through their songs and speeches. Though played by different professional and amateur troupes, the inner essence of all of them is the same. There is unity hidden in the diversity of songs and speeches.

We have to congratulate the artistes who made Aparala Thammanna's collection of songs a successful stage presentation. They have taken enough care to maintain its time limit by singing only the first one or two stanzas only, because it runs to several pages. Sathyabhama's pain of separation, Krishna's eulogizing, etc., which are having long descriptions, have been cut short. Some of the story parts like the episode of Narakasura's killing and the battle with Indra have been left out. Narada here does not go to Sathyabhama's house for no reason. He is displeased with Rukmini when she did not treat him properly, even though he gave her the rarest flower like Parijatha. That is why he goes to Sathyabhama's house to slander. This looks quite natural. The *Koravanji* here after telling '*Kani'* (soothsaying) receives a precious pearl chain from Sathyabhama,

and this is something new. Krishna, who promises Sathyabhama that he would get a Parijatha tree for her in her courtyard, seems to have forgotten his word. It is not even mentioned later. The story comes to an end when *Koravanji* removes her guise, goes to Sathyabhama's house and, after waiting at the door for some time, goes inside and consoles her. Here, since the original intention does not get fulfilled, it looks odd. A major change here is the change in the form of the characters. Instead of the civilised characters of Aparala Thammanna's refined poetry, we see the folk characters here, representing the ordinary folk. The sobriety and refinedness of those characters are not seen here. No episode here goes above the level of the rustics.

The reason for Parijatha gaining special respect by the folk audience, more than other Bayalatas is its power of speech. Sometimes the extempore' speeches here happen to be philosophical harangues too. The freedom of speech that a Parijatha actor takes is not taken by the actor of any other Bayalata. But this freedom is more often misused. These actors sometimes want to exhibit their wisdom like the interpreters of *Thalamaddale*. Therefore they should possess an in-depth knowledge of legends as well as spoken skills. The villagers give more respect to the one who speaks well outside the text than in the texts.[33] An example for this skillful speech: *The younger brother of the son of the star, taking the silver out from the star, eating it as if the star came, hid himself inside the star as he beat with the star.*[34] The meaning of this statement that looks like a riddle is this: here in the place of all the constellations, you should go on inserting the name of a star. The younger brother of the son of the star (Rohini Star) Rohini's son Balarama, his brother Krishna, the silver inside the star (Bharani star) the butter inside the Bharani (a pot), taking from the star (Hastha star) taking with hands, ate as star told (Chithra star) beaten with hands hidden in the star (Moola star), hid in a corner. This kind of a verbal gimmick is the favourite exercise both for the actors and the audience. Most of the performers are educated, having the capacity to quote pages after pages of *vachanas*, *Dasa* verses, and Sanskrit *shlokas* wherever needed. Because of this pedantry, the relevance of situations are

completely ignored. The speeches become lectures or harangues instead of dialogues. 'Lectures will never do the work of dialogues. Lectures are inspired of intellect, whereas the dialogues rise of situations and sentiments. The words of dialogues should be sharp and witty. They should articulate one's feelings. They should be brief too. They should gain the momentum of an argument as they go on.[35] There are examples of the person who plays Krishna speaking at length about philosophy, religion, moral lessons, legendary stories, folk tales and humorous stories as though he has taken the contract of philosophical sermon. Sometimes this fancy for talk goes to the extent of giving opposite meanings to simple expressions for getting applause. Example for this is the song *'Thugire Rangana Thugire Krishnana'* of Purandarasa sung by *Koravanji*. For this, Parijatha has a different meaning. *Thottilu* (cradle) means body, *magu (*child) is the soul and the rope which is used to swing the cradle is the immovable mind.

BHAGAVATHA (Singer) :

In a way the hero of Parijatha played today is *Bhagavatha* himself. It is he who runs the entire play. The other characters call him *Doothi.* He is *Bhagavatha* for the audience and *Doothi* for other characters. Thus he has got two faces. Though he is a type of *Soothradhara* for the play, he is not called *Soothradhara*. It is customary to call him *Bhagavatha*. From the beginning to the end he stays on the stage. The characters, more than conversing among themselves, begin to argue with the *Bhagavatha.* On the whole, the character that catches the eyes of the audience more is *Bhagavatha* only. He gives voice from the background to the songs of all the characters after singing the prayer and the songs of the initial stage. Therefore the *Bhagavatha* here is a balanced combination of *Doothi, Suthradhara* and chorus.

Each and every episode of Parijatha takes place in an atmosphere of light humour. The humour here is of a rare quality. The *Bhagavatha,* who is the *Doothi* here, does not withdraw after introducing the characters. In the action of every episode of the drama, he participates along with the other characters. Sometimes with him, another background singer also joins. He is called Little Bhagavatha.

The *Ganasthuthi* in the beginning that is done by both of them together is a humorous episode. Humour is created through puns. Some of its excerpts are as follows:

Bhagavatha: This is how you should make *karigadubu* (a snack made of rice, jaggery and blackgram). Yes, one measure of blackgram, mixed with five measures of jaggery.

Little Bhagavatha: Sir, how about reducing a small amount of jaggery?

Bhag: If jaggery is reduced, the taste will be gone.

L. B.: Throw some more jaggery, we won't lose anything, right?

Bhag: Then we have to put crystal sugar, cashew nut and *manooka.*

L. B.: Ha, wait, wait, justice should not be ignored. Did you tell young one of...? Is it of a buffalo or a cow?

Bhag: Brother, it is of a he-buffalo. Stupid! It is not a manaka (she-buffalo) but manooka, which means dry grapes, got it?

****

L. B.: What else you want, sir?

Bhag: Sannakki(small sized rice)

L.B. : Khabardar! (Be careful)

Bhag: Why so?

L B.: What sir, you are taking so much liberty with me just because I nodded to whatever you said, eh? Speak a bit carefully sir. Now you are telling Sannaki (Younger girl). Next you would ask for Doddaki (Elder girl).

****

Bhag: What is to be given immediately when the meal is over?

L. Bh: If you feel very tired you should give two pills of julabu.

Bhag: Why so?

L. Bh.: To push out whatever you have eaten.[37]

****

Because of *Bhagavatha*'s agility throughout, the entire show does not become boring anywhere. Sometimes his humour turns out to be impertinence, making the whole situation loses its seriousness. The part in which Krishna describes his *Koravanji's* costumes is beautiful. As usual, the *Bhagavatha* in the form of *Doothi* interprets everything

with extreme stretch of meaning and spoils the beauty of the scene in his enthusiasm to rouse the audience to laughter.

Krishna: Doothi, I have smeared perfumed oil of Champak, Jasmine, rose, flowers after loosening my hair.

Bhag: Oh, there is one more variety. Why did you leave it?

Krishna: What is it?

Bhag: Neem Oil.

****

Krishna: Doothi Shankhamani, I am wearing
Thavaremani, Srigandhamani, and
Sphatika mani on my neck.

Bhagavatha: What is this? You must have left one or
two manis(beads)

Krishna: What are they?

Bhagavatha: The mani (wooden plank) on which you prepare holige and that on which you sit.

Krishna: Doothi . . . I have tied the honnagante
(Gold bell) on my navel.

Bhagavatha: You left one more gante (bell), didn't you?

Krishna: What's it?

Bhagavatha: That around the neck of the Gauliga's
buffalo.[38]

The words of the Bhagavatha, which are uttered with natural humour, sometimes cross the line of decency. When Krishna gets angry and comes down to sit amidst the audience:

Krishna: If she apologizes only I'll come. But she does not have that custom (habit) at all.

Sathyabhama: Doothi, what is it that has gone wrong?

Bhagavatha: Yavva, there is a mistake in your custom.

Sathya: Doothi, where has the mistake occurred?

Bhag: These chaps here are telling this you see;
Gowda(master) should be on the upper seat and.. .But now you see. You are on the upper
seat and the master is on the lower

Sathya: Then how should it be?

Bhag: You on the lower seat and he on the upper

The costumes and makeup in Parijatha are not gorgeous. Krishna wears silkish shirt and dhothi, wears a jhari turban around his head, and tucks a feather on it. In some regions, Krishna is not painted blue. Rukmini and Satyabhama are dressed up like ordinary women. *Koravanji* comes with untied hair spread on her back, wearing a black saree, carrying a basket on her head and clutching a baby doll in her armpit. The stage which is built for Dappinata is used for Parijatha too. When the *chalthi* is given, women characters dance lightly, moving from one end of the stage to the other.

MUSIC:

Parijatha has strengthened its tradition by its distinguished musical style. No other Bayalatas has gained as much appreciation and honour, as Parijatha songs have done.

It is already said that Aparala Thammanna composed *'Srikrishna Parijatha'* as a collection of songs for singing, and that tradition existed till very recently. No doubt they were being sung in Carnatic style. The housewives who continued and protected the tradition of singing them were *Kalavanthinis* (Devadasis) who had acquired a fairly good knowledge of Carnatic music. We had the system of singing our ancient poetry in that style from a long time. The *Kalavantinis* used to sing one each Parijatha song in their music concerts. They were Carnatic music concerts and therefore there is no doubt that the Parijatha song also used to be in the Carnatic style. In music concerts, singing folk style songs is impossible. Therefore it is obvious that the Parijatha songs were sung in the refined Carnatic classical music style. Besides, almost till 1900, the music prevalent in this region was Carnatic only.

We know that our collection of songs was being sung in Carnatic style. But we have yet to find out whether the singing was in pure classical style or with a slight variation of the Yakshagana style. Definitely there is a difference between the style of singing *Shatpadi* and *Sangathya* verses and that of Yakshagana songs. As far as poetry

is concerned, it is rather reciting than singing. This recital is called *Gamaka.* It used to be in particular tunes. Yakshagana took another step further to adopt the method of presenting its poetry, binding the verses to the frame of particular tunes and rhythms. The method of singing Chennappa Kavi's *Sharanaleelamritha* and *Basava Purana* is this. From the point of view of its qualities and features, Aparala Thammanna's '*Sri Krishna Parijatha*' is the best Yakshagana work. That took its birth at a time when there was a rich harvest of Yakshagana literature. In its theme, purpose and inspiration *Sri Krishna Parijatha* is similar to other Yakshagana works. Therefore it is obvious that it is being sung in the Yakshagana style itself.

Parijatha, which was prevalent in the limited circle of the music concerts and housewives[39] recitals, when became a Bayalata in the theatre in its second stage, it is interesting to note how the familiar tunes of songs might have come to the theatre exactly as they were. That means the musical style of Parijatha of Kulagoda Thammanna, in the beginning, may be believed to have been that of Yakshagana. Dr. Shivarama Karantha has strengthened this opinion.[40]

Today the old people do not agree with the idea that formerly Yakshagana music was there in Parijatha. Everyone says that it was Carnatic style. Is it because of their ignorance of the delicate difference between Yakshagana and Carnatic music? The common people are unable to find any difference between the two. Or it may also be like this - after polishing the Yakshagana style, it must have been converted completely into Carnatic style. In this region there was the custom of practising Carnatic music systematically.[41] Therefore the possibility of this conversion cannot be ruled out.

For this conflict, a temporary solution could be found in this way. In the beginning, the musical style of Parijatha was Carnatic. Forgetting the controversy whether it was a refined style of Yakshagana, it is enough if we consider it simply as Carnatic style. Since Yakshagana also has come from Carnatic music origin with some delicate differences, it will not be wrong at all if Yakshagana is also added to Carnatic music.

The well-known actors and actresses like Baragi Rachayya, and Navalgatti Samvakka of today who had started their lives as artistes in Kaujalagi Ningavva's company are of the same opinion about Ningavva completely singing Carnatic music.[42] They also had been taught songs of the same style in the beginning. The fascination for Hindusthani made them forget Carnatic. Today they can sing a piece remembering it with difficulty. Ningavva's orchestra also consisted of violin and *mridangam* to suit Carnatic music. From all these details it is confirmed that the Parijatha play used to be in Carnatic style.

After about 1920, Hindusthani music influenced North Karnataka more than ever before. Carnatic music, which had its firm roots there till then, began to drift away from the people slowly and today it is completely forgotten by them. Because of the entry of some actors, who knew Hindusthani music. to Ningavva's play, historical changes began to take place. There is a background story to the Hindusthani becoming popular and some people learning it with interest in that region. The Lords of Jamakhandi, Mudhola etc. who were Marathis, used to arrange music concerts of famous Hindusthani vocalists and instrumentalists on the occasion of Ganesh festival. Even the common people got the opportunity to attend them. This tradition was popularly known as '*Chauthi* concert'. Thus the people of this region developed a craze for Hindusthani music. Some of these lords kept some singers permanently with them conferring them with the honour of the court artistes. They made arrangements for their subjects to receive education from them. As a result of this, some of the talented people learnt Hindusthani music quickly and came to the lime light.[44] Among them, Rajasaheb of Mahalingapura was also one. He joined Ningavva's Parijatha Company in about 1920. The tunes of Hindusthani songs sung by Rajasaheb playing the character of Krishna, instantly entertained the common people and fascinated them. Nanadi Gondali, who lived almost at the same time, was an exponent of Hindustani music. Shiraguppi Kadagowda was the best singer of the recent times. He had learnt music from Abdul Karim Khan Saheb, the father of Hindusthani music, by staying with him for two years. Because of the entry of these singers, Parijatha

music received a new dimension and underwent drastic changes. Carnatic music removed its guise and wore the new guise of Hindusthani. Ningavva, who admitted a number of Hindustani singers to her company and encouraged them sufficiently, did not give up her Carnatic music till the end. The personality of that artiste, who had a poised taste both for tradition and modernity, is really great.

People say that Godali Kadagowda strictly adhered to the classical tunes, and they did not like it. The songs of others, which were free from the monotony of classical tunes, became more popular. The singers who came later, though they did not learn classical music, imitated their predecessors skillfully and retained that music carefully. There were significant changes because of the entry of Hindusthani music into Parijatha. The *khyals (songs)* of Hindusthani music influenced these songs. As a result, the practice of singing songs in *Vilambith laya* (slow movement), similar to the *khyal,* grew. The *Ganasthuthi, 'Nodiro Balabhimana dayavidu'* belongs to this category. Thus the *vilambith* songs had increased a lot sometime in the past. But now it has receded. At present, Baragi Rachayya and Thakkalaki Vittala sing some of these songs. When they sing '*Adipurusha Narayana'* in *raag Malkauns*, it sounds like a *khyal.* It is set to *Thrithal.* If others normally sung it in rounds of eight *mathras* (syllables), Vittal and Rachayya stretched it to a round of 32 *mathras.* This type of singing, which could be achieved only through talent and practice is becoming very rare nowadays. In Parijatha, some songs are being sung only in tunes without any rhythm. Though it has got the *gamaka* (undulations) of Carnatic classical music, it is not actually *gamaka*. It is clear that it is an imitation of the features of Hindusthani *Thumri.* Some songs of *dhruth laya* (fast movement) completely look like Hindusthani cheez (song). These elements imported from Hindusthani enriched the Parijatha music.

Though the advent of Hindusthani music was sudden and fast, it did not have the capacity to completely replace the earlier Carnatic. The present Parijatha music is the sweet fruit of the fusion of these two. The strange thing is that, though it has regained some of the earlier Carnatic tunes, the method of singing them is completely Hindusthani - the embellishment of Hindusthani to the Carnatic tune.

The names of some of the *ragas* like Nanti, Janjhooti, Regupthi, Sriraga, Mayamalavagaoula, Shankarabharana, Mandavi, Kambhoja, etc. are Carnatic, but the style of their presentation is Hindusthani. Some of the similar *ragas* easily got merged with Hindusthani. Though they say that they are going to sing Mohana, Thodi and Kalyani of Carnatic, what they actually sing respectively are Bhoopa, Bhairavi and Yaman ragas, which resemble them. We may identify the Hindusthani *ragas* popularly known in Parijatha like this - Peelu, Khamaz, Abhogi, Poorvi, Pooriya Dhanashree, Malkaunsa, Madhumada Saranga, Shuddha Saranga, Vrindavani Saranga, Khambavathi, Ananda Bhairavi, Hameera, Kalingada, Sohani, Bheemapalasa, Desa Jogia and Neelambari. (All these are not in vogue now). It looks elegant if the song begins in Hindusthani, proceeds and ends in Carnatic system. Just like Carnatic *ragas* have stayed, the *thalas* like *Atathal, Adithal, Thrividi, Bilandi, Jhampa* etc. also have stayed. Since it is not possible to change them, they have remained like that. Those which can be changed have got Hindusthani names. Since the *Adithala* and *Atathala* of Carnatic are similar to the *Thrithal* and *Dadar thal*s of Hindusthani the Carnatic names are disappearing. The *sama atta thal* (or atathal) of Carnatic and *Dadar* of Hindusthani have got the same *Dhruth laya*.

The people of the present generation have not carefully retained the tune and form of the *ragas*. They are happy with their imitation of the light music of the older generation. As they did not have any formal study of music, only the names of the *ragas* have remained alive, and their tunes have gained more prominence. It is natural that these mobile tunes, which have come down from generation to generation and from region to region have lost their identity. That is why the same song is sung by different troupes in different tunes. Its variety has increased.

An attention - catching feature, distinctive of Parijatha, which is not there in other Bayalatas, is its characters singing their songs themselves. It is said that earlier, in company dramas also, the *Suthradhara* used to sing all songs as in the Bayalatas. About 1880 onwards, Anna Kirloskar and Thrilikkar brought up the practice of the characters themselves singing their songs in Marathi dramas.[45] It

is said that in about 1870 Anna Kirloskar translated Kannada Parijatha into Marathi and experimented it at Pune. He had retained the tunes of the original Parijatha. This system gave inspiration to the further Marathi plays. From the point of view of music they are different in Parijatha from other Bayalatas. The distinctive feature of giving *koach* is not there in other Bayalatas. Though it is there in Moodalapaya, its qualities and features are different. Here the background instrumentalist brings out the light *alapanas* and *thans* in the downward or *avarohana* system, using the *swaras* (notations) of the same tune in which the songs are sung. The *koach,* which fills the middle and the end of the songs, has given a strange beauty to it. All the songs ending in *chalthi* end up with the *koach* of the background music. The rhythm precisely comes to a stop the moment *'Ho thay'* is said at the end of the *koach.* In Parijatha, all of them sing keeping the white-reed high *shatja* (the notation_'sa') as their support. This system has come down from a long time. Singing in a *sapthaka (*the seven notations) at the extreme height is an art achieved with great effort.

As the popularity of Parijatha reached its peak, its influence on other singing system also increased. The famous ballad poets like Gopala Duradundi, Thukarama of Therala, Belgaum Dwarapala etc. have created ballads following the tune of Parijatha.[46] It is said that the old singers of ballads used to sing popular Parijatha songs in the middle of their ballad concerts. Churmuri Sheshagiri Rao suggested some *ragas* and *thalas* to the songs of his drama *'Shakunthala'.* But, giving an idea at the title of those songs of what tunes they would follow, he has given one each line of those songs in their already familiar tunes. The moment you look at them, you will realize that they are the tunes of Parijatha songs. They are as follows:

1) Dushyantha:

> Song: I do not like this cot, soft
> Seat. Why did my woman get
> Angry, as though to say
> Enough is this sport in the
> Woods, O Senapathi'
> (Act-2, Page.37)

2) Dushyantha: Song: Rukmini is like a sugar-candy,
As though to say alas! What
Devi will say - Act 3-P.58

3) Priyamvade : Song. Why did you wake me up and separate me from my lord,
as though to say, I am unhappy (Act 4-page 91)

4) King: Song Did you see Ranga's goodness did u see, as though to say
who is it, this woman like this
Who is it?' (Act-5,P.49)[47]

Sheshagiri Rao's '*Shakunthala*' went to Marathi theatre through Anna Kirloskar. There, very naturally the original Parijatha tunes were merged with Marathi. Besides, it is said that so many Marathi songs imitated the Parijatha tunes later. On the cassettes of some of the Marathi songs earlier, they used to print a line that it is the imitation of a particular Parijatha song.[48] With the tremendous growth of Parijatha, it could be observed that it had its influence on the remaining Bayalatas too. The present *Gollathi* part of *Radhanata* is the imitation of Parijatha. All the tunes of the Dappinata called '*Chillanata*' (its poet is Kudathi Mallappa and it is prevalent around Belgaum) are the tunes of the Dappinatas of the second stage. However at the end of each song, the *Nanti raga koach,* which usually comes in Parijatha, has been added. The Dappinata tune and this *Nanti raga koach* do not match, and hence it sounds very unpleasant to hear. Still they have continued it so far. The false notion that if you put a *koach* as in Parijatha to your song it gives dignity to it, is responsible for singing it in that manner. The strong influence of Parijatha on the dramas has already been referred to. However, there are instances of Parijatha being performed as a drama too. Sri Thathyasaheba Shedasyale of Inapura converted the *Sri Krishna Parijatha* Bayalata into a drama in the early decades of 20th century and experimented on it several times. Most of these experiments were conducted in the neighbouring Maharashtra.[49] Observing the prestige and glory of Parijatha, other Parijathas like Shiva Parijatha, Rama Parijatha and Venkatesha Parijathas were written following that model. But all these were the imitations of Parijatha.

Just like Yakshagana and Moodalapaya, Parijatha is an independent musical style today. This could be identified in the village ruled by Parijatha. They sing the *Bhajana s*ongs in the Parijatha

style. These are not the complete imitations of Parijatha, but they are the new creations in the same style. They say 'sing a song in Parijatha' and do not say 'sing as in Parijatha'. Therefore it becomes clear that it has formed its own independent musical style.

Conclusion:

Parijatha is the most popular Bayalata after *Sangya-Balya.* In Parijatha troupes, there are both amateurs and professionals. The amateur troupes provide entertainment to their surrounding villages occasionally. The history of the professional troupes has become the subject of serious study. These troupes are found mostly in Jamakhandi and Mahalingapuram. Today about 15-20 professional troupes are engaged in performances. In the border regions of Vijapur and Belgaum district, people have great craze for Parijatha. Almost from January till the months of May and June, in all the villages of this region one or the other festival of God or Hanuman's '*Okuli*' festival takes place on a regular basis. During that time they take pleasure in getting the Parijatha troupe to give performance. People do not at all feel bored to see the same play performed every year. That kind of novelty is seen in Parijatha every time.

The professional troupes mostly rely on Parijatha for their livelihood. That is why, of late, they have come down to the extreme commercial level. In the its eagerness of satisfying the taste of the audience, Parijatha is losing its earlier lustre. Modernity has peeped into the tunes of songs, method of dialogues, costumes and makeup. In his craze for receiving applause from the audience, sometimes the performer of Sathyabhama's character comes down to the cheap level of singing film songs, and this has hurt the Parijatha lovers.

The names of some of the former and present artistes, who have made Parijatha a permanent theatrical tradition, are as follows:

Kaujalagi Ningavva, Hukkeri Siddharamappa, Badakundri Basappa, Badakundri Dundapa, Baragi Appalala, Ningruru Helava, Nanadi Gondali, KauntaKoppa Rama, Saudi Mallayya, Alaguru Kittappa, Maranura Achyutha, Gajamanala Ellappa, Mahalingapura Rajasaheba, Mahalingapura Dayan, Baragi Rachayya, Thakkalaki

Vittala, Basapoora Vittalagowda, Mathnals Nagappa, Kyamanakola Ellappa, Shiraguppi Kadagowda, Navalagatti Samvakka Shivaguri Yadawada Malakappa, Masthamaradi Mallappa, Jamakhandi Appalala, Hidakaolla Bheema, Hidakalla Kallappa, Betageri Arjuna, Thoranakatti Eerappa, Basapoora Maulasaba, Molerama, Thigadolli Kallappa, Kalappa, Monappa, Harmonium Mahadevappa, Chandravva, Soragamvi Murigeppa (Mahalingapoora), Lokapura Deshpande.

Notes:

1. Dr. M.S. Sunkapura, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part II, p.131
2. Dr. Ha. Ma. Nayaka, *Srikrishna Parijatha,* (Mysore University), Introduction, p.VIII. This opinion that *Srikrishna Parijatha* is a variety of Sannata, has been seconded by the following writers too: i) Dr .M.S.Sunkapura, kannada Rangabhoomi Andu-Indu, p.13 ii) Dr. M.S.Sunkapura, Srikrishna Parijatha, (Karnataka University) , Introduction, p.xiii) Dr. M.S.Sunkapura, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III,p.131iv) Dr. B.B. Hendi, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p.134 v) K.v.Achar, Karnataka rangabhoomi,p.5
3. Dr. B.B.Hendi, *Janapada Sahithya Darshana,* Part III, p.144
4. Dr. H.K. Ranganath, The Karnataka Theatre,p.69
5. I) Because of some reason Aparala Thammanna had been punished with imprisonment. He had been put in iron chains. But he composed and sung the song of Srikrishna Parijatha with great devotion. There is a rumour that when he sang it, his chains got loosened. (2) According to the statement made by Ramappa Chikkodi ' Aparala Thammanna wrote Parijatha standing at Kulagodu'. (Welcome Speech- 28th Kannada Literary Conference. Rabakavi- Ka. Sa. Parishath Pathrike. 29.3.4: p.48) Here Kulagoda Thammanna has been mistaken for Aparala Thammanna)
6. 1) R.G. Kulakarni, *Srikrishna Parijatha*(Mysore University) Introduction, p.83.20 B.B. Mahishavadi, Saadhane, 6,2. U 99

3) B. B. Mahishavadi, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p.60. 6 a) Venkatesha Sangali, Sirigannada Granthkarthara Charithre Kosha, p.55

7. 1) Dr. Shrinivasa Havanoora, *Hosagannada Arunodaya*, p.217 2) R. G. Kulakarni mentioned above (6 (1)) has stated that Thammana was born in 1800 in the same page where he has also said that he wore the work in 1800.

8. 10 R. Narasimhachar, *Karnataka Kavicharithe, Sam.III*, p.200 2) B. B. Mahishavadi, Sadhane 6.2, p.99 3) B. B. Mahishavadi, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p.60

9. *Karnataka Bharathi*, 9-3, p.20,21

10. Venkatesha Sangali, *Sirigannada Granthakarthara Charithrekosha*, p.55

11. The famous Parijatha artists Jamakhandi Appalala and baragi Rachayya Swami gave this information to me.

12. *Karnataka Bharathi*, 9-3, p.18

13. *Karnataka Bharathi*, 9-3, p.19

14. Ibid, p.19

15. *Karnataka Bharathi*, 19-3, p.138-139

16. *Srikrishna Parijatha* (Mysore University) p.18

17. *Karnataka Bharathi*, 9-3, p.18

18. 10 R. G. Kulakarni, *Srikrishna Parijatha*, (Mysore University) p.278(Footnotes) 2) R. G. Kulakarni, Kabbinahalu, p.271 3) Dr. Sreenivasa Havanoora, Hosagannada Arunodaya, p.217. 4) Betageri Krishnasharma, Kannada Janapada Sahithya, p.76

19. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi*, p.38

20. The historians of poetry have rightly identified them as 'Yakshagana'. Karnataka Kavicharithe, Sam.III, p.200

21. Dr. Betageri Krishnasharma told me this.

22. Two scholars have wrongly mentioned the name of Thammanna as 'Thimmanna' in their volumes.1) Dr. H.K. Ranganatha, The Karnataka Theatre, p566

2) Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, Uttarakarnatakada Janapada Rangabhoomi, p. 37-38

23. Dr. Ra.Ya. Dharawadakara, *Hosagannada Sahithyada Udayakala,* p.566
24. The famous Parijatha artiste Shiraguppi Kadagowdar told me this
25. 1) Dr. M.S. Sunkapura, *Sreekrishna Parijatha* (Karnataka University) Introduction, p. XXII 2) R. G. Kulakarni, Sreekrishna Parijatha, (Mysore University), p.279, (footnotes)
26. In an article called ' Hennumakkala Kolatada Padagalu' by B. Narasamma in 'Abhinanadane' these kolata songs referred here have been mentioned.(p.292-293)
27. Thigadolli copy (all examples)
28. Shiraguppi Kadagowdar told me this with examples.
29. I came to learn this from Sri Ninganna Sannakki
30. Molerama informed me these things.
31. This song has got 12 such stanzas. Only this part is in practice.
32. Balesha Lakshatti, Late Kowjalagi Ningamma'sSrikrishna Parijatha, p.1
33. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttara Karnatakada Rangabhoomi,* p.38
34. Told bt Moleram
35. Dr. K. Shivarama Karantha, *Yakshagana Bayalata,* p.125
36. Two scholars have wrongly stated that this character is also called by names like Dootha and Sarathi. 1) R. G. Kulakarni, Kabbinahalu, p.273 2) Dr. D.k. Rajendra, Janapada Sahithya Darshana, Part III, p.145
37. *Srikrishna Parijatha* (Karnataka University) p.10-11
38. Ibid,p.90-91
39. *Sreekrishna Parijatha* (Karnataka University),p.133
40. The ancient song system of 'Krishna Parijatha of Dharawada region was depended on Yakshagana, Yakshagana Bayalata, p.63

41. In about 1880, one Kunchanooru Shamacharya, who had been the director of Gadag Drama Company, had learnt Carnatic music at Thanjavoor. The statement made by Mudaveedu Krishna Rao, Jayakarnatak 12-II, p.29

42. The senior Parijatha artists like Siraguppi Kadegowda , Molerama and the novelist Rao Bahaddoor, who had seen Ningavva's play say the same thing.

43. People say that today's famous Hindusthani singer Gangubai Hanagal's mother used to sing pure carnatic music. Another famous artist Dr. Mallikarjuna Mansur, when he was a small boy used to hear only Carnatic music and was influenced by the same.

44. It is very much natural to get a doubt that Hindusthani music became popular in this region because of the rule of Bijapur Sulthans. That means at the time of those Sulthans, classical music was bound to certain fixed places like palaces and upper class circles. It had never turned to the poor common people. This mutual exchange of culture, which had been impossible in those days was made possible by the two rulers of Jamakhandi and Mudhola.

45. V.M. Inamdar, *Adhunika Maharashtra Rangabhoomi, Prabuddha Karnataka,* 27-3, p.42

46. B.B. Mahishavadi, *Saadhane*, 6-2, p.98

47. *Sreekrishna Parijatha* (Mysore University) Introduction, P.iii (footnotes)

48. Dr. Betageri Krishnasharma told me about this.

49. Du. Nim. Belagali, Karmaveera, 15.11.71

50. It is not right to say that Kaujalagi Ningavva, Badakundri Basappa and Hidakall Kallappa of the first generation played social plays. K.V. Achar, Karnataka Rangabhoomi, p.16

CONCLUSION

THE DISTINCTIVE QUALITIES OF BAYALATAS

There are some distinctive qualities pertaining to the Bayalatas of North Karnataka. Some situations in them, which cannot not be shown directly, are shown through symbols. These symbols are meaningful. In *Sangya-Balya* and Parijatha, the game of dice is shown through actions. Roopasena, suspecting his mother of sleeping with another man is shown through his action. The *Gollathi* describing the milk and curds she had brought, and giving it to *Doothi* for testing the sample is shown through action. In Sanskrit dramas, they used to divide the stage in semi-circles when two scenes take place simultaneously. The scenes took place on both sides, without the dropping of any curtain in between. In the play '*Sangya-Balya*' if the scene of Sangya and Gangi doing *alaap* takes place on one side, Eerya's ill-tempered shoutings are shown on the other. In Parijatha, as Krishna and Rukmini play dice, *Doothi* and Sathyabhama arrive on the spot. At that time the stage is Krishna's inner sanctum, and it has to be taken that *Doothi* and Sathyabhama are observing their romance from outside.

The entry of demonic characters creates a terrifying atmosphere. A paper house is set in front of the stage at a certain distance. Hanumantha goes to it, puts fire into it and gives the impresson of *Lankadahana (*burning of Lanka*).* The one who performs the role of Devi carefully follows the rules of austerity. Devi does not dance unlike the other characters. She is seated on the lion. In Sanskrit dramas, killing, death and bloodshed are prohibited on the stage. But these puritanical notions are not there in our Bayalatas. In Moodalapayas, which are mostly the stories of war, the defeated character, when they fall down dead, they are carried away from the stage in a realistic manner. The scene of killing Sangya on the stage is very much touching. Kamalakshi killing Rama Singha, and the station master killing Kashibai's child are shown on the stage with action.

MODERNITY:

The essential spirit of Bayalata is dwindling today. The temptation of modern civilisation is shaking its entire existence. In the Rabakavi-Banahatti region of Mahalingapur, the meaning of 'Bayalata' itself is entirely different. Since the reign of Parijatha has been here for a long time, not even the least remnants of Moodalapaya Bayalata are found here. The Bayalatas that are being performed here at present are strange and odd. According to the people here, the free shows of the company dramas in the open air are the Bayalatas. When they do it in the open air, they add background and foreground chorus as in the Bayalatas. When the same troupe presents the same story in a theatre, it strips itself off from the background and the foreground, and achieves purity. '*Lava-Kusha*' of Ashihala is the famous Bayalata of this category. In that, as soon as Seetha enters the stage, she sings the film song (film: Nagarahaavu): '*Karpurada gombe nanu*'.[2] Again sings in between film songs like *Chengu Chegendu haruva* (Film: *Kathariveera*) without any hesitation. *Sooleya Maga, Sampathige Saval, Hemareddi Mallamma* - these are the Bayalatas of this category.

Several Moodalapaya Bayalatas broadcast on All India Radio are the replicas of historical dramas. It is sad to note that the Akashavani (radio) authorities and performing Bayalata artistes related to this, feel proud of this reformed Moodalapaya. The *'Surapurada Venkatappa Nayaka'* broadcast on 10.8.77 in the *Krishiranga (*about agriculture*)* programme from Dharawada station was an example for this foolishness. It was Moodalapaya or Doddata only for namesake. Its structure was just like a historical drama. On its dialogues, the influence of Kandagalla Hanumantha Rao is very strong. The broken and distorted Kannada spoken by the English officer was the artificial imitation of Thyakare in the film '*Kitthura Chennamma*'. It is better to give up all these futile attempts by doing all sorts of gimmicks, after choosing a story that does not suit Moodalapaya.[3]

In many ways company dramas have exercised their influence. In the initial prayer song we hear the name of *Kannadanadu* quite unnecessarily:

1) Vani Vani Varakalyani
Protect us Kannada rani

2) The valiant of Kannada Nadu of good words
Your Kannada words are decent and modest [4]

To feel so much proud of belonging to Kannadanadu is a disease that has come from company dramas, and it is not a healthy sign. The names of Bayalatas also are getting renovated following the model of dramas. Example: *Radhanata-Galapoji Gadla, Sangya-Balya Tragic love story,* etc.

INDIFFERENCE:

The qualities of creativity, dynamism and social consciousness found in the folk theatre of North Karnataka are noteworthy. The folk theatre of this region has been kept alive by adopting novelty and experimental rigour, with an awareness of tradition. However, it is sad to note that no proper publicity has ben given to the Bayalatas of this region at the Karnataka level. There are scholars of century-old traditional mentality who say that the Bayalatas are musical dramas taking birth everywhere like mushrooms.[5] Some of the words of the other scholars who belong to this category about the Bayalatas of Karnataka are astounding: 'In many places of Vijapur, Belgaum and Dharawada districts, different types of folk Yakshagana shows or *Nal-Pagaranas* are in vogue even now. There are plays in which two types of leather-instruments called *Dappu* and *Dimmu* are used as *mridangam.* They are called *Gondaligas* play, *Jathigara's* play, *Devadasas'* play, *Shiva-Parijatha's* play and *Krishna*-*Parijathas'* play'.[6] According to the opinion of some people these Bayalatas are the remnants of *Nal- Pagaranas. Krishna Parijatha, Dasarata* - all belong to the same category. The *Gondaligas* perform the play. They use different leather instruments for music. Thus the absurd statements about them have neither rhyme nor reason. There are people who say that since in Belgaum and Vukapur the Marathi influence is strong, the open air dramas are called by the name '*Karadimajalu*' and they follow more of Marathi tradition.[7] It is ridiculous to wash their hands off by calling a music band like *Karadi Majalu* a Bayalata. It is said that the story of *Sangya-Balya*, popular

in North Karnataka goes like this: 'Eerapa is a poor farmer. He has got a beautiful wife. He wrote his share of landed property to the Sahukar (landlord) for returning some debt he had taken. Sangya's eyes fell on his wife.' This is very much misleading. In the 22nd chapter of the book '*Kannada Nataka*' named '*Folk dramas*' there is only one line that '*Sangya-Balya* is the popular play in North Karnataka.' Even in the enormous and voluminous books written on the history, tradition and culture of Karnataka, the folk theatre of North Karnataka has been completely marginalized. But Yakshagana has managed to receive its place. In the voluminous book '*The Historical Vision of Karnataka*' the word 'Moodalapaya' has appeared only once. Not even a word has been raised about it or other Bayalatas. (By M. Keshava Bhatta and Krishna Rao). In Dr. Thipperudra Swami's book '*The Review of Karnataka Culture*', which received an award from the Central Sahithya Akademy, it has been mentioned only that *Sannata* and *Parijatha* exist in North Karnataka. The old Mysore Government published a large volume called '*Karnataka through the Ages*' in 1968. Its Kannada translation was published in 1970 in two volumes. But in these large volumes no names of any of the Bayalatas of North Karnataka have been mentioned and it is the height of their indifference.

TRUTH-INFLUENCE:

The review made so far shows how powerful is the essence of North Karnataka Bayalata tradition. This tradition possessing the traditional and modern elements in a balanced proportion, is not inferior in any way to any other Indian tradition. Those who name only Yakshagana as the contribution of Karnataka to Indian Folk Theatre, have been unable to perceive the essential spirit of this tradition of North Karnataka. Definitely its contribution to the modern dramatic literature is considerable. The concept of Brecht's Epic Theatre has taken our modern playwrights in a new direction. It is a historical truth that when the new breeze of adopting a complex story into drama using the techniques of folk dramas began to blow, the theatre of North Karnataka itself became the source for our dramatists. In the famous dramas like Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambar's

Rushyashringa, Narcissus and *Jokumaraswami,* and Chandrashekhara Patil's *Gokarnada Gaudashani* the songs, techniques and narrative methods of these Bayalatas have been effectively used. The early part of *Jokumarswami* (which has received the Central Sangeetha Nataka Akademi) is completely an imitation of Parijatha. Some of the songs of *Gokarnada Gaudasani* have been directly lifted from the Bayalatas. In many of his plays, Sreeranga has successfully executed the role of *Suthradhara*. This *Suthradhara* resembles the *Suthradhara* of the Bayalatas of North Karnataka more than the *Suthradhara* of Sanskrit dramas. Thus the Bayalatas of North Karnataka are quite capable of acting as a source for anything wherever and whenever needed. However, much attention should be given to the protection and safeguard of the essence of this tradition, which is standing firm and strong, inspite of the tempestuous assault of modernity.

Notes

1. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, *Uttarakarnatakada Rangabhoomi,* p.49
2. I have heard Narada singing *'Shreedhara Keshava Narayana'* film song' *Sathi Anasuya'*, in *'Samba Lakshini Kalyana* (Hosapet)
3. This cursed system has struck yakshagana also. A new Yakshagana has been created now called *'Japanee Krishi Vijaya'*. In it, a *gramasevak (an employee who does village service)* finds a solution to the food problem of India by teaching the villagers the method of growing paddy though Japanese method and telling them to grow fourfold. This work, which has come as a mouthpiece of the government, which never suits the yakshagana style, has been praised 'as the best experiment made in the yakshagana field at the service of the people'. Kubanoor Balakrishna Rao, Yakshagana, p.380
4. *Sugandha Pushpaharana* (Sreekantha Shasthri)
5. Tha. Su. Shamaraya, *Kannada Nataka,* p.28
6. Ganapathi Rao Pandeshwar, *Yakshagana Kalaloka,* p.16

7. U.S. Krishna Rao and U. Chandrabhagadevi, A*dhunıka Bharathadalli Nrithyakale,* p.112
8. M.T. Dhoopada, *Karnataka Janapada Rangabhoomi,* p.243
9. Tha. Su. Shama Rao, *Kannada Nataka,* p.49

APPENDIX

Adasogus:

There are no humorous characters in Bayalatas that are originally connected with their stories Therefore the humorous characters like *Sarathi, Doothi, Lalya,* etc., were created straightaway to fulfill the requirement. But when, due to the limited space given to these characters, humour did not get its full expression, the folk audience must have got displeased. They must have been driven to a doze by the lengthy and serious narrative contexts. It was for solving this problem that the *Adosogus* entered the shows at intervals.

These *adosogus* are rather satirical in tone, filled with the pure social consciousness of the folk thinking. These are not pertaining to the legendary themes. The different types of people of different nature, who are prominently seen in our society are the characters here. Usually, *Adasogu* is a narrative of songs and dialogues running between two characters. Humour is its main objective. Along with it, irony and satire also are mixed. If an attempt is made to collect and compile them, more than a hundred *adasogus* may be available. The writers of these have remained anonymous. A folk poet of the place composes some songs. The *Suthradhara* gives some light tunes to them. The comic performers add their own words to these songs and arouse laughter. Therefore you cannot say that they are composed by a single person. They are the combination of many talents put together. You may see the examples of some of those songs.

1] Here is the dialogue between a husband and a wife. Both of them have decided to go to the festival in the neighbouring village. The husband is in a great jovial mood. He tells his wife to prepare the food-box to be carried while going there:

In order to go to the fair
You prepare the carrier with *seggirotti,* smeared
With sesam, and

A pack of sour food also,

For tomorrow.

2] The gypsy woman (Koravanji) when she comes to predict future, she sings like this:

1) On the pond raising a tent of jiggery,
There comes your son-in-law, Mallavva
Wear Jasmine flowers on your daughter's hair

2) The cat playing there the cat playing here
The cat running along the potter's lane
The cat moving round the prostitutes' lane
That cat moving around is dead O!

3) The conversational song between a young boy and young girl called Parivya and Ningi goes on like this.

Parivya: Are you coming Ningi?
Are you coming Ningi?
In our field there are big fruits

Ningi: I won't Parivya
Don't call me simply
Don't open your mouth

Parivya: In our field there are violet fruits,
All that is for you.

Ningi: I won't Parivya
I know you pilfer the vegetable on my rotti.

Some *Adasogus* run only through conversations and there are no songs. Some humourous folk stories are performed in this manner. One or two example are given below:

1] **Neetolya**:

Neetolya is an innocent and ignorant young man. He goes to work for a rich man. Though the master tells him that he would give him twenty rupees as wages, Neetolya does not agree. He insists on getting two rupees. The master laughs at his ignorance and agrees to do so. Once, the master leaves home for some other village. He takes his servant Neetolya with him. On the way they open the food box. On seeing the rotis smeared with sesame, Neetolya thinks that they are the rotis made of lice. So he says he would not eat them.

When they open the parcel of rice, on seeing the garlic pieces in it, he rejects it saying that there are worms in it. The master coaxes him to eat. They continue their journey. The master tells Neetolya to see carefully whether something has fallen back. After walking for some distance, they come to a river. They want to take bath, and they look for a towel. But they do not find one. When the master asks him why he had not brought it, Neetolya tells that he has been told just to see whether something has fallen back, but not to bring it. The master tells him it is not so, and he should bring it. They resume their journey. Neetolya looks back and sees the horse's dung and carries it in his hand. The master gets fed up of him and dismisses him from his job.

2] **The Coward son:**

The father was very much proud of his coward son. He goes to call his daughter-in-law. There they tell him that they would send the daughter-in-law only after seeing the son-in-law. Since he had already told them that his son was a wrestler, he had to call him. When his father opened the topic of his wife, the son begins to cry saying that he did not want a wife at all.

Father: Son, if you do like this I would hit you.

Son: Appa, anyway you are hitting. But please don't hit me on the joints.

The father forcibly brings his son and makes him stand before his daughter-in-law. The father-in-law puts a condition that he would send his daughter only if he defeats her in wrestling. But the moment she touches him, he falls down with a thud.

These humorous episodes weaken the effect of seriouness of the main story. It is also said that they spoil the effect too. But the position of these *adasogus* in folk theatre, which are brilliant with humour, and which bring a lot of awareness and social consciousness, is of great significance. Hence the folk audience have developed great interest in them, and therefore, we cannot brush them aside as insignificant or unwanted.

****

OUR PUBLICATIONS

Sl No.	Title of the Book Name of the Author / Editor	Price
1	**Indina Kanasu Naalina Nanasu** *Ed: Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna*	100.00
2	**Jaanapada Varsha – 2011** *Ed: Dr. S.P. Padmaprasad*	100.00
3	**Jaanapada Vastukosha** *Ed: Prof. S.C. Ramesha*	140.00
4	**Keralada Janapadaveera Tachcholi Odenan** *Dr. K. Kamalaksha*	140.00
5	**Kadugollara Kolatada Padagalu** *Ed: Sri N. Mohankumar*	80.00
6	**Tulunadina Janapada Kathegalu** *Ed: Dr. Palthadi Ramakrishna Achar*	100.00
7	**Karnataka Samshodhana Janapada** *Ed: Prof. A. V. Navada*	950.00
8	**Malenada Nudikosha** *Ed: Smt. S. D. Venakshi*	150.00
9	**Burrakatha Jayamma** *Dr. K. Premakumara*	40.00
10	**Gombegoudara Ramanagoudaru** *Dr. Chandrappa Sobati*	80.00
11	**Namma Parisarada Lambanigaru** *Dr. Mallikarjuna Kumbara*	60.00
12	**Kadugollara Bedagina Padagalu** *Ed: Kumari. M.B. Shwetha, Sri. N. Mohankumar*	80.00
13	**Humayun Haralapura** *Dr. Vrushabhakumar*	80.00
14	**Appagere Thimmaraju** *Kumari. Shwetha M.B*	80.00
15	**Dr. P. K. Rajashekhara** *Sri. Sangamesh S. Gani*	120.00
16	**Namma Gidamara Balligalu** *Ed: Smt. Shanti Nayak*	70.00

17	**Desheeya Krushi Hatoti mattu Samrakshana Kramagalu** *Ed: Dr. Prakash Kammardi*	100.00
18	**Jaanapada Varsha-2012** *Ed: Dr. K. V. Muddaveerappa*	120.00
19	**Dakshina Bharatiya Deshi Krushi Vijnana Kosha (Two volumes)** *Chief Ed: Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna* *Executive Ed: Prof. R.V. Sundaram* *Ed: Prof. S.C. Ramesh*	(price for both the volumes)1000.00
20	**Manteswamy Epic Tradition of South Karnataka** *Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna*	280.00
21	**Dakshinatya Abhinaya Siddhanta** *Dr. Guru Rao Bapat*	120.00
22	**The Bayalatas of North Karnataka** *Dr. Basavaraja Malashetty* *Translated by. Dr. Parvathi G. Aithal*	130.00
23	**Nelada Nenapu** *Dr. Chikkamagalur Ganesha* *Dr. Jayaprakasha Shetty .H*	200.00
24	**Nadavara Jaanapada Tavanidhi** *Prof. N.R. Nayaka*	260.00
25	**Vistruta Jaanapada Granthasoochi** *Chief Ed: Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna* *Ed: Kyatanahalli Ramanna & T.S. Rajappa*	700.00
26	**Uttara Kannada Karavaliya Janapada Kategalu** *Ed: Shanthi Nayaka*	120.00
27	**Moolatanada Nagabramha Mattu Parivara Daivagala Paaddhna** *Dr. Indira Heggade*	150.00
28	**Tatya-Bapu Avara Laavanigalu** *Ed: Dr. Harilal Pawara*	80.00
29	**Poojari Shivanna Helida Junjappa Mahakavya** *Ed: Dr. T.N. Shankaranarayana, Dr. M.N. Venkatesh*	170.00
30	**Belagallu Veeranna** *Dr. M.N. Venkatesh*	70.00
31	**Manjamma Jogathi** *Dr. Chandrappa Sobati*	80.00
32	**Jaanapada Jagali Bi-annual, collection of research articles** **Edition – 1,2,3,4** **Annual subscription - subscription fee for five years Per copy**	50.00

The larger the island of knowledge, the longer the shoreline of wonder. Though this statement has been made about science, it is true of folklore too. Folklore is an amazingly vast and pervasive world of unending information and unfathomable knowledge. Its study stimulates our intellectual, creative and aesthetic desires. It tells us about the people's attitudes, beliefs, concerns, and the entire way of their life. That is why our university has undertaken the project of translating folklore between Kannada and other languages, hoping that it may open the gateway of knowledge of folklore at the world level.

This valuable book has been translated into English by Dr. Parvathi G.Aithal. Translation is not an easy job. Especially, translation of folklore is a herculean task. Unless the translator is creative and extraordinarily resourceful, he/she cannot render it successfully. Here, a reading of Parvathi G.aithal's lucid presentation of Dr. Malashetty's book as 'The Bayalatas of North Karnataka' in a simple and easily understandable style, very soundly establishes the fact that it is an effective translation. Hence, on behalf of the university, I heartily congratulate her. I hope that this book will be of great use to the future students of folklore.

Prof. Ambalike Hiriyanna
Vice-Chancellor

Centre for Extension and Consultancy
Karnataka Janapada Vishwavidyalaya
Gotagodi – 581 197

ISBN 978-93-83149-23-0
9 789383 149230 >

₹ : 130/-

Printed at : Raja Printers, Bangalore-560 027, Ph.: 22254000